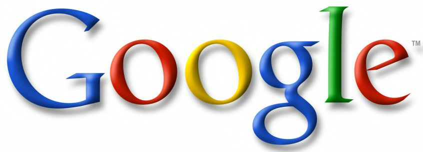

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LADY CHESTERFIELD'S LETTERS
TO HER
DAUGHTER
GEO. AUG. SALA.

LADY CHESTERFIELD'S

LETTERS TO HER DAUGHTER

BY

GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA

AUTHOR OF "THE BADDINGTON PEERAGE," "TWICE ROUND THE CLOCK,"
ETC., ETC., ETC.

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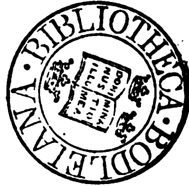

PREFACE.

I INTENDED these Letters to be the confidences and counsels of a garrulous old woman of the world—made more talkative by the confinement of an invalid's sofa—but withal, in spite of her age and her ill-health, as shrewd, as caustic, and as humorous as I have known many old women of the world to be. The charitable critic at a loss, like the schoolmaster, to know "where to have" me, will scarcely, I hope, accuse me of an egotistical desire, in calling my imaginary letter-writer, Lady Chesterfield, *née* Constance Sevignier, to provoke comparisons or to establish a parallel between these essays and the elaborate epistolary performances of the vivacious widow of Louis the Fourteenth's time, or the polished exercitations of Philip Dormer Stanhope. As well were these the supposititious communications of a west-country fox-hunter, might I call them "provincial letters." Nor, again, in an age when burlesque is the vogue, and the most brilliant achievements of human genius have been impudently and senselessly caricatured, shall I find, it is to be hoped, wiseacres to reprehend me for an attempt to parody some of the most skilful and polished compositions in the English language. I know, from long experience in the craft, that many professional critics confine their labours to reviewing the title and imprint of a book—a few lines of its exordium, and the last phrase or so of its peroration. Of such was the clerical gentleman (to whom I hereby return my sincerest thanks) who, writing in the *Era* newspaper, happening to

stumble over a perhaps not very courtly anecdote related by Lady Chesterfield in illustration of some whimsical theory, gravely recorded his opinion that the whole series of letters had been written by a "costermonger in petticoats." Have you never observed that the people most prone to accuse you of coarseness in diction almost invariably, in reprehending you, employ themselves the very coarsest language? Thus I am emboldened to think that ordinarily candid critics will acquit me of an endeavour to imitate or to parody the letters of Lord Chesterfield to his son; that they will find no parallel passages, no similitude in theory, no identity in expression, no similarity in illustration.

This little book may suffer, I am perfectly willing to admit, under one very serious imputation; and it has from first to last one grievous artistic fault. It is certain that, although Lady Chesterfield does not talk exactly like a costermonger, she talks a great deal too much like a man. It would be easy to beg the question—to say that I have known this masculine old lady's prototype, an ancient woman who had seen cities and men, who had read men's books, and kept men's conversation, ay, and done men's work in her time, without losing her better feminine qualities, or abating in one jot in her love and sympathy for her own sex. It would be as easy to assume that long illness and comparative solitude had cast my elderly heroine's thoughts into a somewhat sterner mould than is the matrix of the majority of female reflections; and that the remembrance of the world in which she lived years ago—under many aspects a sterner, stronger, more outspoken world than this dainty community of 1860—

mingled with later environments of books and newspapers, and the conversation of the cynics and valetudinarians of an inland bathing-place—might not improbably produce a frame of mind favourable for discoursing on human nature and human things in the manner affected by the old lady who prattles through my pages. But I disdain such artifices, and candidly acknowledge that Lady Chesterfield writes likes a man, for the reason that her amanuensis was a man—myself. Had I seriously endeavoured to give a thoroughly feminine stamp to these letters, the work would have gained in artistic completeness, in symmetry, in illusion; but it would have lost in vigour, in force, and in real truth. Little enough of those qualities may remain, as it is, in the book; but the very paucity of goodness is an additional reason for not losing what little there may be. I could have made Lady Chesterfield write, think, feel, as the greater portion of women write and think and feel; but she would have been at the best but a hobbling, hunchbacked, paralytic shadow, more crippled and more inert than the verbose old lady whom I have stretched to chat and grumble, and distribute praise and blame, on her sofa at Pumpwell-le-Springs.

Deprecating comparison, it may be remarked, that the greatest "fictional" letter-writers who have gone before me have resembled, not their ideal heroes and heroines, but, with scarcely an exception, themselves alone. Does the "Citizen of the World" write more like a Chinese Mandarin, or like Oliver Goldsmith of Green Arbour Court? Is it more a Persian Sophi or M. de Montesquieu who indites the "Lettres Persanes?" Can any one fail to recognise Mr.

Douglas Jerrold in "Punch's Letters to his Son?" or, to stretch the illustration, in "Mrs. Caudle's Curtain Lectures?" And finally, in a certain famous volume, containing certain mysterious "Letters and Speeches" of a once great Lord Protector of England, are we not with much greater frequency reminded of the style and presence of Mr. Thomas Carlyle than of Oliver Cromwell?

So, beneath a very flimsy disguise, worn as carelessly as an oriental lady will wear her yaknack when a Frank is passing by, I have put my own words and thoughts into the mouth of Lady Chesterfield. The little doctrines she inculcates are mine: of course I except her peevish accesses of cynicism, her little outbursts of old-world Toryism. As to the rest, I have endeavoured to make her plead the cause, uphold the rights, denounce the wrongs, the cruelties, the hypocrisies, and the lies, considerations of which, whether I have been engaged in matters of fact or matters of fiction, have occupied my pen since I first took it up to be a working literary man thirteen years ago. If I live, as by Heaven's mercy I shall, till 1880, I hope to be able to turn to some dusty files in the British Museum, and find that in 1847, although in language cruder, although in turn of thought rash and superficial, I yet upheld the sunny theories concerning right and wrong which I hold now, and which I hope to hold twenty years hence. . . . . . *Vitæ summa brevis, spem nos vetat inchoare longam.* That I know; but I Hope, nevertheless.

GEO. AUG. SALA.

LONDON, *May*, 1860.

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LADY CHESTERFIELD'S LETTERS TO HER DAUGHTER.

LETTER THE FIRST.

MAINLY CONCERNING THE PERSONS A YOUNG LADY OUGHT TO KNOW.

Pumpwell-le-Springs.

I AM in receipt, my dear Louisa, of your affectionate but unsatisfactory letter, dated the 28th ultimo. Your sentiments, my dear girl, are excellent, but your caligraphy is defective; your style leaves many things to be desired, and your orthography is imperfect. The assumption of the motto "*Che sarà sarà*" on your seal is not justifiable. It does not mean anything beyond the inculcation of a fallacious fatalism. Moreover, it is the device of the ducal family of Bedford; and while I question the right of any advertising stationer to retail it to you, cut on glass, for the sum of sixpence, I am not at all certain whether the employment of such a motto does not constitute a use of armorial bearings, and so lay you open to a quarterly visit from the tax-collector. I remember, when you were quite a little girl, that it was so ruled in one of the courts of justice, and that a thistle on a seal with the motto "Dinna

forget" was held to be heraldry, and amenable to duty. Nor can I abstain from pointing out to you that the habit of crossing and recrossing your letter-paper is both inconsiderate and unladylike. It displays either parsimony and "paper-sparing Popeishness," or it insults the weak eyesight of an aged correspondent. I would not have you tack your epistles down the back with thread, and number the pages till the whole assumes the guise of a small octavo pamphlet; but I would have you remember that paper is very cheap, and that the art of deciphering a modern lady's manuscript is not quite so easy as the Royal Game of Goose. Our grandmothers, to judge from their music-copies and recipes, wrote in a bold, fat little hand, and with a broad-nibbed pen. Violet note-paper and Mordan's gold pens enable the young ladies of the present day to skim over their letters in devious mazes of slim lines that always remind me of the gyrations of an accomplished daddy-long-legs. In my time we used to dot our "i's" and cross our "t's:" those minor items of punctilio seem rejected, now, as quite superfluous.

As regards spelling, I am content, since my Lord Malmesbury's letter—(your papa knew him, my dear)—to look upon that branch of education as purely mechanical, and subject to the caprices of taste; but I must protest, in the word "friend," against the precedence of the "e" over the "i." It is not possible, Louisa, to have a "freind," or to entertain feelings of "freindship" for any one. The very eye, in innate delicacy, revolts at the misplaced vowel. You would be ashamed to write that you "luv" me, or to subscribe yourself my affectionate "dorter;" yet the solecism into which you and hundreds of other supposititiously well-educated young ladies fall is quite as glaring, and quite as offensive. Concerning your punctuation, I am disposed to be tolerant. It is not so much wanting in accuracy as in

general presence; and I am decidedly of opinion that if you cannot punctuate well, it is much better not to punctuate at all. I do not like a letter to present the appearance of the points having been thrown in through the medium of a pepper-castor. We have lately seen a rational innovation in this difficult art by using dashes. These suit the impulsive and not very logical minds of our sex, and I therefore counsel the employment of the dash. 'Tis the best way of getting over an imperfect syllogism—which last word, my child, I hope is one that you know nothing at all about. The proper use of semicolons necessitates a very rigid exercise of the reasoning faculties; and ere you can apply them correctly to your phrase, you must ask yourself a great many times the questions "Who?" and "why?" Wrangling women are always redundant in the use of these points; and your dear papa had a friend (he also enjoyed the friendship of His Royal Highness the Duke of York) who declared that he had broken off a match with a young lady with twenty thousand pounds to her portion, solely because she was in the habit of using many semicolons in her love-letters. "It looked, you know," Colonel Flushing used to say, "as if she had a vast deal too much reason, you know; and argument, and nagging, and finding out things' weak points, you know." A handsome creature was Colonel Flushing. He went to Walcheren, and fell into a ditch full of mud; and when he came back he was elevated by His Majesty to the Order of the Bath.

I have nothing more to say against your letter, save that the postscripts, two in number, are inordinately long; and that you are given in all cases to the abuse of the rarely permissible process of underscoring those words and phrases you wish to be most forcible. Remember, this indiscriminate underscoring rarely gives emphasis. More fre-

quently it exhibits only weakness. Better to look out a stronger word in a dictionary of synonymes than to brace up your weakly ones with dashes. I can only tolerate underscoring when a woman is writing in a Rage. Then she may derive some vigour from the practice, and make the ugly expressions uglier by underlining. In fact, these dashes may be considered as the marks of her nails on paper, and she scratches *you* with them.

It is far more agreeable to me to revert to the praiseworthy features of your letter, and to hope that it may be the precursor of very many such affectionate communications. You are just eighteen, my dear Louisa; you are handsome, you are clever, you will one day be rich. I look upon you as on a youthful sovereign who has just attained her majority, and ascends her throne in all the glory and triumph of possession. Indeed, it is a regal heritage—to have youth, and health, and money. But a queen, my dear, is environed by flatterers and fawners, and cozening parasites. Those roses strewn in her path have the very prickliest of thorns in their stalks. The end of the sceptre is loaded, like a life preserver, with lead; the crown is studded inside with little spikes that press upon the forehead; and, let me tell you, daughter of mine, if you were to strip off that fine velvet and gilding from your throne, you would find beneath only tin-tacks and coarse wood, incurably affected with the dry-rot. It is pleasant to tread on the embroidered tapestry that covers the steps of the daïs; but the gay carpeting may mask only so many pitfalls.

Ah, the queens that have groaned with their own Evil underneath their point-lace and diamonds; that have quarrelled with their crowns as children with their bread and butter; that have wished themselves grooms in their own stables, and have been meanly jealous of the maids

that dressed their hair! Is it not better that the queen—young, timid, inexperienced—should have some staid and steady old servitor by her—one who has served the King, her father, faithfully—to be her guide and adviser; her prime minister, in fact? In the lives of real Kings and Queens the ties of kindred are often and perforce broken. If Anne Boleyn had been spared, she would seldom, I am afraid, have been consulted by her daughter Bessie; and that poor blamable Bourbon female who reigns in Spain to-day might decidedly have found a better councillor than Queen Christina, her mamma. Affairs of state, my dear, alter hearts, and alienate them. But what fitter prime minister than your mother can *you* have? You are destined but to be queen of a boudoir, and empress of a tea-table. You will have but to sign the death-warrants of your admirers: never those of wretched criminals. If we mothers had not a claim to tender counsel to you for that we bare you in sore travail and sorrow, and nurtured you when you were naked, and helpless, and feeble, and sat up long nights by your white cots when the flame of your tiny lives flickered in the socket and trembled in the balance, at least we may plead for a hearing for the things we have seen and the experience we have attained. Let the old hen teach her chickens to walk; and let me—(I know I shall tease you, but the irritation will be wholesome)—tell you, in its own old words, an old crabbed story about two lions:—

"An old lion, among other precepts that he gave his son, charged him that he should never fight with a Man; because, if he was not too strong, he would, at least, be too crafty. The young lion heard him, but regarded him not; and therefore, as soon as ever he was full grown, hastens abroad to seek a man to be his enemy. He came into a field, and saw a yoke of oxen standing ready furnished to

plough, and asking them if they were men, they said, 'No; but that a man had put those yokes upon them.' He left them, and went aside; and espying a horse bridled and tied to a tree, asked him if he were a man. He was answered, no; but that a man had bridled him, and would by and by come to ride him. At last, he found a man cleaving wood, and asked him; and finding him to be so, told him that he must then prepare to fight with him. The man told him, with all his heart; but first desired him to help to draw the wedge out of that tree, and then he would. The young lion thrusts in his paws, and a little opens the tree, till the wedge fell out, and the tree closed upon his feet by its returning violence. The man seeing the lion fastened, and the lion seeing himself entrapped, the man cried to his neighbours to come to his help; and the lion, to escape his danger, tore his feet from the tree, and left his nails and blood behind him; and returning with shame and smart to his old father, said to him: '*Mi Pater, si paruissem monitis tuis, ungulas non amississem.*' 'I had not lost my nails had I obeyed my papa's commands.'" Oh, for the foolish young lions and lionesses that are caught in the cleft sticks every day!

You will let me warn you, my dear, against men and their devices, won't you?

You parted with me on your eighteenth birthday, and it was on that important anniversary I determined to commit you to the care of our friends in Pagoda Square, Knightsbridge. I know, I am persuaded, that from our dear Mr. de Fytchett, who is so idolised in the Royal Rabbit Warrens Office, from our cherished Amelia-Charlotte his wife, and my old schoolfellow, you will receive all that maternal care and watchful protection which I unhappily am unable to bestow on you. I hear that young Ferdinand de Fytchett is wild, and owes money to people who sell things and cheat young officers;

but he is almost always with his regiment; he is engaged as deep as a coalpit to his cousin, Miss St. Ledger; and when he does come to town you will find his arm useful at flower-shows and Crystal Palace concerts. In Frederica de Fytchett I trust you will find a sister. The young woman's principles are excellent. She is well educated, and exceedingly plain; and when she is no longer serviceable as a companion to my Louisa, I think the best thing she can do—if she can persuade herself to dress her hair like a reasonable being, and wear dresses that don't trail on the ground behind and are three inches too short in front—is to renew her visit to me of last autumn, and marry old General Gargall. The doctors have patched up the tiresome creature once more; the eye that he has left does not tell so badly when he keeps the left cheek to the wall; and when Mr. Gray, of Cork Street, has sent him down his new leg, the odious man declares that he will take to dancing again. *He* dance! faugh! yes—in Hans Holbein's panorama, when Death plays the fiddle. He is immensely rich, and fatuous, and feeble. After he had played double dummy with me the other evening, he cried, and said he would give me the diamond solitaire that belonged to his uncle, the ambassador, if I could find a fresh-coloured young woman to marry him. He is not more than seventy-nine, and the respectability of his connections is not open to question. He did not possess the friendship of your dear papa, but had met him at many noble mansions when Royalty was present.

Need I dwell, my dearest, upon the reasons that render the widow of Sir Charles Chesterfield incapable of accompanying her daughter into the great world? Alas! you know them too well. The gay little barque is launched into life's ocean; the poor old hulk, decayed and weather-beaten, is laid up in hopeless ordinary close to shore. For ten years I

have reclined on this sofa; for fifteen years this spirit of mine has whispered, "Vanity of vanities!" I am sixty, my dear, and you are eighteen. You never saw your good papa, and I had passed a whole long lifetime of happiness with him before you were born. It seems a hundred years ago that I had other children—girls young and handsome as you; boys gallant and wild like that lieutenant who is to be your brother. There is a tombstone in Brighton churchyard, with our name on it; and She who sleeps beneath, had she lived, would have been two-and-forty now, and your mamma a great-grandmother. They are all dead, child—Charley, and Harry, and Will. I can scarcely realise the fact that they ever lived, but for their little letters and playthings, and a tiny odd glove—it was bought in Lamb's Conduit Street, in the year 1822,—with the thumb stiffened with the gnawing of the little teeth that have crumbled away, oh! ever so many years since. It is dreadful to think upon what the grave hides: to think that beneath that slab, and the turf, and planks, all that we so loved and cherished—all that used to smile, laugh, and dance, lies mouldering there in a box. Better to be as my Harry, deep, deep among the coral reefs of the Indian Sea. And yet it is a mercy, too, my daughter, to know that decay has done its worst, and that dust has returned to dust. The better part, the Spirit of the loved, burns brighter, and lives again, spurning its dull earthly envelope, in old fond hearts, and beckons us to Come. But a little, little while, and our bones, too, shall be laid beneath the slab—and quickly may they moulder, that we may sooner meet those that have gone before. I think of this often, and without despondency, as men and women as old and wellnigh as feeble as myself, come and chatter around my sofa. When we are young, Louisa, we thirst for the possession of a palace, from which a tyrant is keeping us out.

When we are old, we are in a prison, from which we pray the Tyrant to deliver us; and yet we have grown so accustomed to it, that when the jailer is weary, and the dungeon-door stands wide open, we shudder to snatch at the deliverance and to venture forth into the open air.

You have not been much with me, dear girl, and have, therefore, the more need of my advice. The bedside of a sick and cross old woman was not the place for blooming youth and health. I wished you to hear other conversation than the bald, worldly gossip that we, poor crippled pensioners of the Battle of Life, were fain to indulge in. Let me see: you had a nursery governess, Miss Fluff, whom you scratched and bit, when I, too weak to undertake the task myself, instructed her to whip you. You completely tyrannised over poor Fluff, whose father was a respectable person in the coal trade, and had been ruined by winning a ten thousand pound prize in the lottery. You were then, if my remembrance serve me, sent to Miss Gimp's establishment, Sussex Square, Kemp Town, Brighton. It was there you learned to sing false, to mispronounce the French and Italian languages, and to have your sketch-book filled with elaborate pencillings and water-colourings by Mr. Urban Raffles, your drawing-master. Amelia-Charlotte wanted me to send you then—you were fifteen—to Madame de Vergenne's *Pensionnat de Demoiselles*, Cité Beaujon, Champs Elysées, Paris. Your dear papa had a vast prejudice against French schools, which he associated somehow with Jacobinism, Tom Paine, and General Buonaparte; and although I should have wished you to acquire the real Parisian accent—(I received my own finishing from the Marquis Ailler de St. Pigeon, an emigrant of '89, who adored the unhappy Marie Antoinette, and lived at Old Brompton)—I yielded to the almost dying injunctions of Sir Charles Chesterfield.

I am not an admirer of French schools, where the pupils learn principally to cast their eyes down, and their chances of getting a husband up; and I should have objected to Frederica (who was three years at Madame de Vergenne's) as a companion for you, if I had not been persuaded that the girl was too stupid to have learnt anything either of good or evil from her schooling. For the completion of your education, at home here at Pumpwell, I found a treasure in Mademoiselle Eulalie de la Begueulerie. Lamentably ill-favoured, that strictly proper young person was highly accomplished, and unremittingly assiduous. For the year which she devoted to the perfection of your accomplishments in music, languages, and drawing, I paid her no less a sum than one hundred guineas. Her mode of tuition was well worth the remuneration she received; and I am happy to state that she is now in partnership with Mrs. Tuckle—whose husband, they say, a sadly clever, dissipated man, plays cribbage from morning till night—at Buskington House finishing establishment, near the Hot Wells.

I have perused with very lively interest the lively account you gave me of your journey to London, per Great Eastern Railway, and your safe arrival in Pagoda Square, and have laughed much over the pen-and-ink sketch you inclose of the discontented cabman. From your description of your travelling companions from Pumpwell, I can see that you have already some discernment as to the persons a young lady ought and ought not to know. I should have confided you to the protection of some gentleman on whom I could place dependence; but most of my acquaintance, who are of mature age, in this place, want either arms, or legs, or eyes, while the young ones suffer under an equal deficiency of brains. My old friends have come to Pumpwell to die; the young are too anxious to begin

life on their own account; they want experience—and, besides, you have no cousins here. You say that there were three clergymen in the carriage—two elderly, stout, and florid; the third young, thin, and pale; and that you conversed with them all on the weather and similar topics till they alighted at Portsoking-cum-Bordoe. In this, my dear, you were in error. Had the thin, pale young man been alone, no harm would have been done. The clergy of the Established Church are generally safe and proper persons to know, although with Dissenters I should require references ere I spoke to them; but, to judge by his company, this young man was a curate, and his fellow-travellers were probably beneficed, perhaps dignified clergymen. Did they wear aprons, my dear, or black gaiters? Had they shovel hats? The higher clergy are averse to the patronage in their presence of younger men. The position in the most respectable society of a young lady who knows an archdeacon, or a prebendary, is made. You can scarcely, I fear, ever hope for the friendship of a Bishop. Casual as are the rencontres of railway travelling, they occasionally ripen into acquaintance; and you are too young and too unprotected enough to know any clergyman beneath the rank of a rural dean. In the country one can ask young parsons to tea. They will run messages for you, often sing second prettily, and are useful in shopping to carry things for you; but, in London, to be friendly with a curate is one of the last refuges of an old maid, a *chaperon*, a surgeon's wife, and a finishing governess.

Siphkins, my companion (who has dropped off to sleep while reading "Adam Bede" to me, and so given me time to scrawl—you and I only know with what pain—this letter), has been in love with a curate for nine years. The poor creature—Siphkins's *tendre*—has seventy pounds a year; and his rector, who receives about seven hundred, resides (for his lungs) at

Pau, in the Pyrenees. You know him, my dear: Mr. Lampkin, Doctor Lupus's curate. I believe the poor fellow receives alms from a dreadful society that gives old clothes to curates. When he comes here to tea, he eats so voraciously of muffin that he goes away quite shiny; and, if I were not ashamed to insult a clergyman, I should order him a good meal of cold meat in the kitchen, for I am sure he is half starved. He lives at the circulating library and Berlin warehouse on the Pump Parade, and, I think, works samplers or embroiders petticoat-hems in his leisure time. His courtship of Siphkins, who adores him, seems to consist, chiefly, in bringing her bookmarkers, with appropriate devices. He never said "Bo!" to her in my hearing, and I don't think he could muster up enough courage to utter the same exclamation to a goose, were he left alone with the Michaelmas bird for a lifetime. He is not in the least High Church, and shudders when I talk of Doctor Pusey. He is one of the best and tenderest of creatures. Old as his clothes are, and scanty his body linen, I am certain he stints himself of both to cover the naked. That man's charities are untold, though his bounty often cannot exceed twopence-halfpenny. He was a sizar of his college, I am told, and kept an idiot sister, from the proceeds of a scholarship he won, till she mercifully died. He is up early and late, going about curate's work, bumping that poor large head of his in low-browed doorways, sitting beside beds made of rags and shavings on the floor, where the poor lie sick of typhus and cholera. I hear this on every side; yet, somehow, he isn't popular. The girls don't work braces or muffatees for him, or subscribe to buy him a silk gown. There is no talk of presenting him with an ebony cabinet, with the drawers full of sovereigns. What use is there in his marrying Siphkins? He has nothing. She has nothing. The most that I could do for them would be to set them up in a school, where,

in six months perhaps, they would go bankrupt. Hydrag, my doctor, says it would be much better to put them into a chandler's shop. I am no politician; but surely there must be something wrong here. All that money oughtn't to go to Pau, in the Pyrenees. Some of it should remain to increase the salary of the curate of St. Piston, Pumpwell. But what can you do, my dear? There are Bishops, and commissioners, and people, who of course know more about these things than we laymen and women can do. Latin and Greek, and Hebrew and mathematics, and only seventy pounds a year! It is all for the best, I suppose. You can't make a man popular; and Mr. Lampkin is decidedly not liked. They say he has two *H's* in his alphabet. He has a very large head and sandy hair. He breathes dreadfully hard when he is spoken to, and has an unpleasant habit of cracking his finger-joints. To have all these defects, to be poor and in love with a woman he cannot marry, and a curate, is a most hopeless state of life indeed.

Who was your sixth companion in the carriage? There were the three clergymen, your maid Pincott, yourself, and —ah! artful girl, who was *Numero Six?* You tell me all about him in your postscript. Infatuated young woman, are you already in love? He sat opposite to you. His feet were the tiniest in the world. His teeth gleamed like diamonds. (Rats' teeth also gleam, my dear. And serpents' fangs are sharp as lancets.) He had such loves of moustaches, blonde and drooping, and mingling with his whiskers. His hair was parted down the centre. The puppy! His hands were small and white. He wore a beautiful rough suit, all over pockets; and a heavy watch-guard, with two lockets—one square, one round—hanging to it. One of them, perhaps, dear, held the fusees he lights his cigars with; in the other there may be the heart of a

foolish girl. He looked at you with those deep blue eyes till you felt quite confused. I dare say. His neckcloth was passed through an exquisite diamond ring. Are you quite certain that he had paid for it? He didn't speak much, but he asked you if you knew a horse called "Pepperbox" that they were laying odds against for the Cesarewitch. He was a fribble, child! You say that you are sure he was an officer. Can't a man wear blonde moustaches, and carry a cocked-hat box under the carriage-seat for show, without belonging to the Life Guards? And even if he belonged to the army, do you think there are no cornets and captains who, covered with gold lace, ride before the Queen—who live on their pay, and spend half-a-crown out of sixpence a day? At Babylon Bridge Terminus, you say, this exquisite alighted without wishing you good morning. He was a brute; but you are ready to excuse him because he was in such a hurry to claim the rough little Skye terrier that had been howling so dismally in his solitary box all the way from Pumpwell. Did your moustachioed dandy go away in a Hansom cab? He may have been a Government clerk on leave, a betting man, a fashionable tailor, or a rough-rider to a livery stable. No; when I come to pore over your closely-crossed postscript, I find that a charming little brougham was waiting for him at the platform—the coachman and groom with cockades in their hats. You say that he lit a cigar as big as two fingers as he entered the carriage. It must have been his own brougham, or he would not have smoked in it. There were two horses. There was a tiny coronet on the panel. My dear, I may have been too hasty. Your travelling companion was, in all probability, a Nobleman. But you say a King Charles's spaniel was looking out of the brougham window, and began to snap and bark furiously directly he espied the

terrier; also that the nearest window-blind was half-down, and that you think some one else—a lady—was in the vehicle. My darling, a British Nobleman is a personage whom we ought all to be proud and delighted to know; and, had my afflictions permitted me to have been with you, I should, probably—from the society in which I mixed during the lifetime of your dear papa—have recognised his lordship immediately. He might have been a baby in arms when I first saw him; but I should have detected the family likeness in a moment. To know an individual of such elevated station would, indeed, be an honour and inestimable pleasure; but a railway carriage was not the place for such an introduction. You may meet his lordship hereafter. You did quite right in lowering your veil when he turned round—his foot on the carriage step—to have a last look at you. The young nobility of England, my dear, are very wild; and there is no knowing whom else might have been in that brougham.

I most earnestly hope that the wretch of a cabman who abused you so shamefully, and flung your luggage on the pavement when you refused to pay him more than half-a-crown fare from Babylon Bridge to Pagoda Square, will be prosecuted and punished as he deserves. There used to be stocks and pillories for these disgraceful people; but such wholesome punishments seem to have been abolished since that Reform Act from which we were all to reap so much benefit. There was a hackney coachman who was rude to poor dear Sir Charles one night, when he brought him home from a loyal dinner at the British Coffee Hotel, Cockspur Street, and who was transported. I believe that it was some months afterwards that he was punished, and for horse-stealing that time; but Sir Charles threatened that he would speak to Government about him, and I am sure he

kept his word. I remember that your dear papa could scarcely stand or speak plain on the night he came home, doubtless in consequence of the man's rudeness; and the wretch had also, it appears, robbed him of eight corkscrews and two volumes of Acts of Parliament, which—I don't exactly know why—he had brought home from the British Hotel. I wonder Pincott did not tear the cabman's eyes out. Of course, the servants in the Square took his number, and he will be had up and tried.

Shanko Fanko, my little page, tells me that it is nearly post time. He has to call at the library and the doctor's, and I must close this letter. Heaven bless you, my dear!

CONSTANCE CHESTERFIELD.

LETTER THE SECOND.

HAS PRINCIPALLY REFERENCE TO THE PERSONS A YOUNG LADY OUGHT NOT TO KNOW.

I CONGRATULATE you, my treasure, on your comfortable installation in Pagoda Square. When Sir Charles and I kept house in London, it was in Piccadilly Place we lived. His duties compelled him to be near the person of his sovereign; indeed, when the Court was at Brighton, he had private apartments in one of the minarets of the Pavilion constructed expressly for him by Mr. Nash. Piccadilly Place was built of red brick; the drawing-room had bow-windows and a verandah; and at either side of the door there rose from the railings a lamp-iron, and an iron extinguisher for quenching the flambeaux which the running footmen of those who came before us used to carry round their coaches and six. We had a black footman, poor Quimbo, who nursed you as a child, and died of frost-bite in the nose in the mild winter of '28. Our quarterly bills for wax candles were prodigious, and Mr. Carbonnell sent us the very best of old port wine. I went to Court in a yellow chariot with very high springs, and your good papa's arms—he had only proper pride, my dear—painted on three sides. Wicked Mr. Theodore Crookback, the great Church and King wit and poet, said, when he came to dine with us one day, that if he could afford to keep a carriage, he would have his arms painted on each side the splashboard. At all events, we had the silver crest of the

Chesterfields on the sides of the hammercloth, which was a present to your papa from Doctor Pangloss, the noted physician who attended the Emperor Alexander in his last moments at Taganrog, and received three hundred thousand roubles, and an order to quit the country immediately afterwards. Now everything is changed. Some great old families still live in the old squares, and the views from the windows in Piccadilly and Park Lane will keep them from entire desertion, always; but the most respectable people have taken to living in neighbourhoods which, in my young days, were marshes and grazing meadows for dairymen's cows, and were at night infested by highwaymen and footpads. I should like to know where Pagoda Square, Knightsbridge, was thirty years ago. My dear, Brompton was in the country then, and you had scarcely passed Hyde Park Corner before you were in the green lanes. Knightsbridge Green meant something more, in those days, than a street full of rubbishing little shops. I suppose it is all perfectly correct; but I for one cannot see the propriety of people of fashion living about the places where criminals used to be hanged, and where builders and stone-cutting people had their yards.

I saw what it was all coming to, when ten years since I was—for the last time—heigho!—in London, and they were building those huge barrack-palaces at Albert Gate. One was finished, and that Mr. Hudson, the Railway King, as they used to call him, lived in it, and I am told received persons of the very first figure. Does he live there still? In my time, the nobility would as soon have thought of visiting Mr. Bish, the lottery-office contractor, or Mr. Hunt, the blacking-manufacturing patriot, as a person of this description. Radicalism and railways, my dear, have ruined this country. Your Radicals are always for building, and giving votes to people who live in brick cabins they call houses. Thank goodness, Pumpwell

has always returned two staunch Conservative members. Sir Harry Malvern, and Mr. Harrogate, the Bishop of Tunbridge's nephew, our present estimable Blue representatives, do not, it is true, speak in Parliament, which assembly I am told is now monopolised by talking attorneys, apothecaries, auctioneers, undertakers, and adventurers of every kind; but where would the County Infirmary and the Pumpwell Greencoat School be without Sir Harry and Mr. H.? Dear Sir Harry was with me yesterday in the blue coat and top-boots in which you remember him so well. He said, in his bluff way, that the country was going to Old Scratch, and that the confounded Radicals had done it all; and I perfectly agreed with him. Mr. Harrogate, he says, will not think of opening his lips next session. A man who used to serve him with hops, my love, is in the House, and had the impudence the other day, in a low vulgar speech, to call him the "last of the pigtails;" but he is writing a book about the Restitution of the Admiralty Droits, which will, I trust, on publication (by Bumpus, of Dover Street), prove to the world at large that true literary talent and elegance of style are not yet extinct among the Conservative party.

Indeed, we have reason to be thankful for our Blue members. The Duke of Toppletoton would give up his villa at the Hot Springs, and take away his custom from the town, if the tradesmen didn't give plumpers without a question for the Blue candidates. This is, indeed, discipline and order; which last is Heaven's first law. I believe there has only been one break in our Blue representation during the last forty years, and that was in 1820, at the time of the unfortunate Queen Caroline's trial, when the junior sitting member, Lord Daiseyfield, voted against his King and Constitution, and, till he was forced to resign by his indignant father (the Earl of Buttercupp) and his

constituents, remained a Radical of the most dangerous description. His connection with the most noble house of Buttercupp caused his folly to be overlooked; and, besides, Daiseyfield had always been a ladies' man, and professed some sort of Quixotic sympathy for the plain and improper person whom he chose to call his outraged Queen; but the shock was dreadful to his colleague in the representation, Sir Eldon Thurlow Stowell, Bart., and the dear Earl had fits when he heard which way his son had voted.

Does London reach quite to Fulham and Isleworth yet, Miss Louisa? In my time it had gone as far as Hammersmith, and was fast closing on Brentford. Kensington High Street, which was once a pleasant drive out of town, had been permanently Londonified, and was stretching out stucco feelers towards Bayswater and Notting Hill. I declare that I have no patience with the growth of London. It isn't natural. It isn't moral. It ought to be stopped by Act of Parliament; and if that will not stop the evil, Doctor Lupus (when he comes home from Pau in the Pyrenees) ought to preach against it. Depend upon it, this aggravation of the proportions of an already unwieldy monster must be, after all, the "Great Tribulation" that is coming over the earth. We have a mad gentleman here, Mr. Thunderclapp, who preaches week after week at Jowler Street Chapel, against the Great Beast, and the Dragon, and the Iniquity, and similar embodied improprieties. Poor man, he had better leave off running his head against the Pope—(who, I am given to understand, is the nicest old gentleman living)—and the idolatries of Room (as he calls Rome), and the Emperor Napoleon; and confine himself to London. *That's* the Demon that requires binding for a thousand years, and casting into a pit. It *must* be put a stop to; and I hope those excellent and disinterested gentlemen, the Master

Builders of the Metropolis, won't hear of any compromise with their disobedient workmen which will tend to put an end to the Strike, about which we have read such a vast deal in the newspapers lately. At least, while the Strike lasts we shan't have any more new streets commenced. At least! Ah! futile crying out against the growth of great cities! Will not all things find their level some day—even to these cloud-capped towers of Victoria, these gorgeous palaces of Albert Gate and Manchester-warehousing Cannon Street, these solemn temples in Margaret Street, whose inquisitive pinnacles interrogate the clouds? All must dissolve,—decay.

Haven't I told you about the artistic gentleman from New Zealand, of whom Lord Macaulay dreamt—somebody else having dreamed the dream before—who is to sit on London Bridge and sketch the ruins of St. Paul's? My dear, where are the towers of Belus, and the "exceeding great city," thousands of whose people knew not their right from their left hand? Those cities are not to be inhabited for ever, child. The Arabian is not to pitch his tent there; the shepherd is forbidden to make his folds in those waste places; only the wild beasts of the forest lodge there, with Bats and Serpents, and howling monsters. The daughters of the Ostrich dwell there; the Satyrs dance; the Wolves howl to one another in their palaces, and the Dragons in their voluptuous pavilions. The time of those cities accursed has come; ours is yet to be accomplished. Be very still and reverent, then, by times, as you unfold the shilling map of London—as you gaze at Horner's enormous panorama from the gallery of the Colosseum dome—as you peep into that huge silent record of London Life, the Post Office Directory. What a crash and dreadful bankruptcy there may come some day, when Sir Charles Barry's great palace shall go by the

board; and of Pagoda Square, Knightsbridge, there shall be nothing left!

In my last epistle to you, Louisa, I offered you some little advice concerning persons whose acquaintance it would be expedient for you, as a young lady just entering life, to form; and I shall, as opportunity may serve, continue from time to time my counsel in this respect; but as a faithful guide, before he discourses to the intending traveller on the pleasant halting-places and shady retreats in the road he is about to traverse, should warn him against the precipices and miry places, the dismal ambuscades where devouring tigers or ruthless bandits may lie hidden, ready to spring on him, so do I think it necessary, at this early stage of our correspondence, to warn you against the people whom you ought *not* to know, or, if you are compelled to come into contact with them, to know only that you may avoid them.

The De Fytchetts, you say, see a great deal of company. I do not wonder at it. Amelia-Charlotte was always a pushing woman; and, although there is an indefinable something in her manner that will always prevent her acquiring truly aristocratic connections of the most elevated order, her acquaintance is, while miscellaneous, respectable; and had I placed you with friends whose circle, though more refined, was exclusive to isolation, you would have seen a better part of the world, but not so much of that world at large as, at your age, I should desire you to survey. And now, with the aid of the *miroir face et nuque* of your letters, let us glance, in all charity, but in a spirit of justice, at our excellent Amelia-Charlotte's visiting list.

Mr. de Fytchett has his friends, of course. You write that they are all stupid and prosy, say nothing at dinner, and go to sleep when they come up into the drawing-room afterwards. They are the very persons whom a girl actuated by a proper

ambition ought to know. These are the persons who have Only (and marriageable) sons, to whom they leave immense fortunes; and who sometimes, when childless, take fancies to pretty girls whose singing or playing tickles their palled old ears. Then they go home and make wills in their favour. "And they marry the pretty girls too, sometimes, mamma," I think I hear you say. Yes, Miss, they do; as my Lord Erskine did; as scores of wise, and venerable, and famous men have married their cook-maids, or worse—in their dotage. You are too young, rosy, and full of hope, as yet, for me to countenance by approbation these alliances between May and December.

When a young woman is in her fourth or fifth season, and has sung and played her musical *répertoire* over about five hundred times; when she has run the gauntlet of all the flower-shows, water-colour exhibitions, and *fêtes champêtres* that succeed each other with such punctilious regularity year after year; when she has so lost the pleasure of composing a letter to a person of the other sex as to wish for the aid of a *Petit Secrétaire des Dames* in writing it; when Number One has gone off to India and married Bessie, and Number Two has gone into the Church and taken to asceticism and celibacy, and Number Three has had his letters back, and has returned those he has not lit his cigars with, and Number Four has turned out a deceiver; Number Five, a pauper; Number Six, a rascal; and Number Seven, a fool—then, when all these foxes have been started, and the scent has been lost again, it will be time for me to tell that young woman—I am sure she will never be daughter of mine—what is to be said in favour and disfavour of young girls marrying old gentlemen.

But it is very foolish, and very wicked, to dogmatise on the subject. Some girls seem cut out for old men's wives. Look at

the little Creole school-girl who married Scarron—old, hump-backed, *blasé* as he was—and she was yet to him the most loving of partners till poor, witty, *cul-de-jatte* Scarron dying, his widow softly ascends to be Marquise de Maintenon, and at last the wife of another old man, *blasé* and sick as he who wrote the "Roman Comique," but not hump-backed. She came into possession of a magnificent relic, this ex-school-girl. To her devolved the periwig and high-heeled shoes, the Ribbon of St. Louis and the Order of the Golden Fleece, and what more was mortal in the way of parchment, puckered, wrinkled skin, aching bones, bleared eyes, chattering teeth, and watery blood of Louis the Fourteenth—great, magnificent, and victorious—of France. I do not, therefore, advise you to cultivate old men, but you should know them—when they are rich, and old, and feeble.

Half-old, middle-aged old men, as one may call them, are to be avoided. There are the disagreeable male fogies, in tall white neckcloths, with scanty grey hair, and semicircles of grey whiskers on their cheeks. They are always making themselves intolerable somewhere; semi-old men—say from forty-eight to fifty-five. They have troops of gaunt, overripe daughters, whom they pertinaciously strive to get married, to the injury of the prospects of young and pretty girls. They cut their sons off with a shilling, turn their nephews and nieces out of doors, or beat their children systematically on certain days of the week. They are tyrants to their wives, and ogres to their servants. They are always being appointed executors to wills that lead to litigation; always being appointed trustees of the most impracticable kind to marriage settlements; always prosecuting clerks in their offices, or in those of the companies they belong to, at the Old Bailey, and getting them transported.

And, let me whisper to you, Louisa, these rigid, re-

morseless, white-neckclothed, grey-whiskered, medium old men are the very gentlemen whose vast fortunes often turn out to be shocking delusions and swindles; who on their sixtieth birthday are detected in being not worth a penny, and who make horrid failures that ruin poor gentlewomen with small incomes, half-pay officers and clergymen, and then run away to Portugal, and have such dreadful pains in the chest that their medical advisers positively forbid them to attend in the Bankruptcy Court, London, in order to have their wicked accounts investigated.

Your poor, good papa, who was as simple as a child in money matters, knew just such a grey, rigid sinner as I have described; who, after hanging his confidential clerk for forgery, went all to pieces in the great crisis of 1825—robbed everybody and ran away to America, where he set up a Bank, and was afterwards shot with a bowie-knife or a revolver—I can't remember which—by an American Colonel, who, oddly enough, was also a hatter and tavern-keeper. Thus, while I should advise you to know such dear old gentlemen as Sir Toby Sharples, who was Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, a long time ago; and old Doctor Condonation, formerly of Doctors' Commons, but now of that extremely improper Court for Divorce and Matrimonial Causes—where a gentleman in a wig puts asunder those whom the Church hath joined together, and almost for nothing, whereas, in my young days, a divorce was a most genteel thing, never costing less than fifteen hundred pounds, and a private bill in the House of Lords was only procurable by the highest nobility; while I should counsel you to know and make much of Mr. Mc Gawky, the millionaire West India Merchant who realised his fortune when the fairest of the British colonies were ruined by the abolition of negro slavery; and old Mr.

Chadernagaut, formerly of the Company's Civil Service, who has more lacs, as they call them, of rupees than he knows what to do with; and Sir Ikey de Lypesmid, that darling old man, beloved by every one for his wealth and munificence—(although he is a Hebrew—and I don't think that in a Christian country, my dear, Jews ought to be admitted to Parliament)—and who is so modest and mindful of his humble origin that in his drawing-room, at Carrybag Court, he has under a glass case the hundred-bladed penknife and the lemons—quite shrivelled up and brown now—that he used to offer for sale, when a little boy, at the White Horse Cellar in Piccadilly: while you ought to know these most respectable old gentlemen—although they do go to sleep while you are singing "*A forse è lui,*" and do drop crumpets on the carpet, and spill their soup, and chuckle in the wine-glasses at dinner—there are other old men whom, apart from the exigencies of ordinary politeness, you ought never to know.

Avoid Admirals. They have always nieces to whom they leave what money they possess; their stories are intolerably long and prosy, and frequently indelicate, and, as a rule, they discourage matrimony, on the ground that it distracts naval officers from attention to the duties of their profession. Old Military men, too, unless they hold special official appointments at the Horse Guards, are of not the slightest good among a girl's list of friends. In most cases they are desperately poor, having only their half-pay, or else they have selfishly sunk what savings they have scraped together in annuities. If you meet them in the Park, the leering of their naughty old eyes, and the shaking of their buckskin-covered fingers, are so offensive as to be almost compromising. What hearts they once possessed have been cut into little pieces, like kidneys *sautés au vin de*

champagne, and distributed in the different garrisons in which their lives have been passed, from Cork to Calcutta, from Graham's Town to Gibraltar. They almost live at their Clubs, and are full of dreadful mess-table jokes and barrack-yard stories. They care for nothing but whist-playing, port-wine drinking, and snuff-taking. They are good for nothing but to sit for their portraits in the Exhibition of the Royal Academy, and to enhance the price of vermilion and yellow ochre, or else to shamble along Pall Mall after a Drawing-room at St. James's, with their cocked-hats and feathers on the backs of their bald heads; their tunics all in creases, their stars and crosses bulging, their girths low, and their spurs and brass scabbards clinking on the pavement.

I speak feelingly on the subject. I am tormented by two yellow Admirals and three mahogany Generals at Pumpwell, to say nothing of a wooden-legged old Post Captain and a hopeless Major with false teeth. To be sure, they are in plain clothes; but their conversation in their buff waistcoats and checked cravats is none the less intolerable. They are all heroes, no doubt; but I wish there were an asylum, like Chelsea Hospital, for these heroes of rank, and one within the precincts of which they would remain. It is not pleasant to see a hero of eighty in a purple wig, indigo whiskers, plum-coloured moustaches, black eyebrows, and white eyelashes, tottering out of Mr. Truefitt's shop, where he has just been re-dyed, and wagging his advancing chin under the bonnets he meets. A hero might do better than spend his time in a Club smoking-room, bandying scurrile jests with beardless boys. *My* idea of a hero in his old age is realised by those exquisite lines of Sir Henry Lees, the Master of the Armory to Queen Elizabeth, and which I copy out now from my common-place book for you:—

"My golden locks Time hath to silver turned—
Oh! Time too swift, and swiftness never ceasing:
My youth 'gainst age, and age at youth have spurned,
But spurned in vain: youth waneth by increasing.
Beauty, strength, and youth flowers fading been;
Duty, faith, and love are roots, and ever green.
My helmet now shall make a hive for bees,
And lovers' songs shall turn to holy psalms.
A man at arms must now sit on his knees,
And feed on prayers, that are old Age's alms."

I wish some of our ancient, indecorous heroes of Rotten Row and the Clubs, and the Star and Garter at Richmond, would bear these simple and beautiful lines in memory.

Let it be understood that you are to be courteous and amiable to all you meet in Pagoda Square, without, however, forming any violent friendships. A proud, disdainful girl is, in nine cases out of ten, either repulsive or ridiculous, and her *hauteur* is ascribed either to sulkiness, to conceit, to stupidity, or to *mauvaise honte*. The tenth case is an exception, and I think a sufficiently haughty demeanour not at all ill-placed in an exceedingly beautiful and accomplished young woman. To so splendid a palace we cannot grudge the guard of honour at the gate, and the emblazoned standard flaunting above the keep. Dusky Cleopatra must have her gorgeous galley, and must invoke Isis, and extend her hand now to Cæsar, now to Antony—the Masters of the world—and die at last disdaining young Octavius: invincible though vanquished. Beauteous Portia must stand on her *haut pas*, and treat the Prince of Morocco in as cavalier a manner as she choose; but who would not laugh to see Little Bo Peep with a great plume of ostrich-feathers on her head, and an embroidered tail of a train, and flapping a fan, whilst she seeks the sheep that carry their tails behind them? A shepherdess's crook, a little petticoat and bare feet, as you

see Little Bo Peep garnished with, in Mr. Francis's tender, thoughtful, charming picture, are all that pretty and winning little maiden needs to make us love her.

So carry not your head too high, my Louisa. You are not Cleopatra; you are not Portia, although you are bigger than Little Bo Peep, and wear the best of shoes and stockings. Don't be proud; don't be arrogant; in dress, in conversation, in demeanour, in love, in command to those beneath you. And ah! don't be proud in Religion. There are no reserved seats in Heaven; there is no giving half-a-crown to the pew-opener, or currying favour with the beadle; the gate of the Kingdom is too narrow for much crinoline, and Lazarus's callow brats may pass in while the Misses Dives are ostentatiously clamouring for entrance. Affectation is only the small change of Pride; the first may sometimes terrify, sometimes awe; the second only sickens, or makes people laugh. How eminently uncomfortable to herself and to those about her does a proud girl become; how men grin and guffaw, behind her back, at Miss Araminta's affectation and sentimental die-away airs!

Do you know the women who make the wretchedest wives in the world? Not the termagants; their hearts are often as soft as toast and butter, and they could whip themselves for remorse as soon as their tempers are over. Not the jealous wives; so long as they keep their hands off red-hot pokers and sharp scissors their jealousies flatter a man's vanity, and act, besides, as a salutary check on him at all times; the husband is in a continual wholesome fear of being *found out*, and you may depend upon it that all men have, or have had, or will have, *something*—you see I underscore the "something"—to be detected in during their married life. Can we women lay our hands on our hearts and say that this, too, is not the case with us? Our-

existence is a tissue of deceits, some pretty and some very ugly to contemplate; and many a man knows no more of the state of his wife's heart than he does of the price of the lace sleeves she wears, or of the meat he is eating. He thinks he has gone to market and bought the Heart and the leg of mutton himself. Poor sillikin! he knows nothing of the secret clause in the treaty with Mr. Chopperblock, and that women will turn the market-penny in love as well as in the matters of millinery and butcher's meat.

Don't think the Fools make the worst wives. There is often, in the most egregious idiot of a woman, a marvellous depth of patient, seeking affection in and looking up to the Being she thinks superior to herself. She is as one tossing in a cockboat on a dark sea on a stormy night, and looking hopefully, she scarcely knows why, to the beaming lighthouse to save her. She is wrecked, often; but sometimes those on shore hear her meek wail, and man the life-boat—manned only by a little infant, as it may be. The most foolish of the virgins grows wise in her degree, when, indeed, she first hears the cry of the child she has borne. My dear, the worst, the incorrigible wives are these—the haughty, cold, equable, staid, indifferent, selfish woman, who looks on rigidly when her husband comes in wet through, and calmly opines that his steaming clothes will dim the gilding on the picture-frames; the woman who, when the man tells her that he is bankrupt and ruined, asks icily whether her quarterly allowance for dress will be continued to be paid with regularity; the wife who would refuse to visit her husband in prison on the ground that it is a "dreadful place," and who, should his long pent-up agony burst into a flood of tears, quietly remarks that she had better "leave the room;" the woman, in fact, who would have her corns cut on the day of her first child's funeral.

And next in horror to such a woman—and I have known scores of them—is the lackadaisical, die-away woman, who lies on a sofa all day, with her shoes off, and reads novels; who will not permit a cigar, a dog, or a pewter measure in her house; who drinks drams of eau de Cologne or sal volatile—a progressive course of tippling generally terminating in Cognac; who has hysterics and fainting-fits, and eats mutton-chops shortly afterwards; whose tears are as easily turned on as water from a boiler; who screams when she sees a grasshopper, won't go over a stile, can't eat sage and onions, is sea-sick on the way to Greenwich, and never enters her kitchen. Men don't bully or beat these women—they neglect and leave them; they are the women, I think, who are, in after life, distinguished for being handed fainting out of every place of public amusement, and for living in Boulogne and Champs Elysées boarding-houses, and travelling in railway carriages marked "for ladies only." In the whole catalogue of people whom a young lady ought not to know, I consider these most objectionable members of our sex as objects of special avoidance.

Among the gentlemen whom you have found, or will find, in Pagoda Square, I should wish much to warn you against Irish barristers with red whiskers and ultra-Repeal tendencies. If you give them the slightest encouragement, they will bore you to death about the Wrongs of Ireland, Theobald Wolfe Tone, and the phantasmagoric Parliament in College Green. They go very little into society; and it is very probable that half an hour after they have made their bow to you they will be discussing the merits of your vocalisation and of your personal appearance over pipes and whiskey-punch in some tavern. Sir Charles said so, often. To do them justice, however, they always speak of women in terms of the most

enthusiastic reverence, and generally magnify a plain Miss into a Marchioness. But they have no money, and are generally impracticable. They never get the ear of the Bench; they never get beyond the sub-editorship of a newspaper (your papa took much interest in journalism, and had a share in the "Alfred" weekly sheet); they are inveterate fortune-hunters, and when they do get married, it is generally to a dilapidated widow with a Chancery fortune, which competency—a costs-in-the-cause and perpetually bill-filing income—is about the genteelest form of pauperism and the most dignified state of beggary that I am acquainted with.

I spoke of newspapers. My dear, avoid—shun as you would a plague—all *professional* literary men. An author, with a good Government appointment of eight hundred or a thousand a year, may be barely tolerated. The man may mean no harm, and may be occasionally serviceable. Against doctors, lawyers, clergymen, independent gentlemen, who have written books, I have no complaint to make. They resemble gentlefolks who are fond of participating now and then in private theatricals. But your *bête noire* should be the professional author,—the man who makes his living by his pen. Don't have anything to do with him. Stand afar off. Gather up your skirts when he approaches. Listen to his barking from the drawing-room; but don't go near him: he bites. Of late years these persons have gone a great deal more into society than is conducive to its peace and respectability. One meets them almost everywhere, and hears of nothing but the eminent Mr. A. and the celebrated Mr. B. When I was young a very few only of the class I mention were in society. Doctor Southey, Mr. Theodore Crookback, and Mr. Tommy Moore were received in the first circles, though of different politics. I believe Sir Walter Scott—who had besides a reputable profession, that of the law, whereby to earn his

bread — was asked out a good deal in Edinburgh; and people of subversive tendencies received Leigh Hunt, who libelled his late Majesty so shockingly, and Mr. Hazlitt the playhouse-critic, and Mr. Shelley, who didn't believe in anything and was drowned. But now one can scarcely take up the *Morning Post* without seeing the name of an author as a guest at some fashionable entertainment. What on earth can people see in them? It is all very well to read their books, and to send a guinea to the Literary Fund; but of what good are they in society? Their clothes scarcely ever fit them, and they smell frequently of tobacco-smoke. They are most rude and dogmatical in argument, and do not seem to hold books in the estimation that genteel people hold them, as sources of rational amusement and relaxation, but rather as things to be either extravagantly extolled or violently abused. When they are not talking about themselves they are moodily silent, and make faces in the looking-glass. Mr. Metylder, the great novelist, used to look at himself in a spoon all dinner time. They have the oddest and most disagreeable manners. They crumb their bread, and make pellets of it; hit their neighbours' knees, spill their coffee over ottomans, cut the leaves of handsome books, which are only displayed for their cover's sakes on the drawing-room table, with their fingers; and, if one happens to drop a harmless piece of scandal, they burst into furious diatribes against what they call calumny and envy.

Oh! they are very virtuous persons, these literary gentlemen; so their poor, neglected, outraged wives and defrauded creditors say. See what disgrace a connection with literature brought upon my Lord Byron, who should have been an ornament to his order, and to Mr. Shelley, whose connections were excellent, and had been most genteelly brought up, and was heir to a baronetcy. They can't hand a lady down to dinner without treading on her dress. They don't dance.

They can't pay a compliment without being either awkward or sarcastic; when they condescend to speak to you, it is most likely for the purpose of taking notes of your conversation, and drawing a wicked caricature of you in their next book; and how do you know, even if you meet them at the opera or at an evening party, but that they have just come out of some dreadful hospital, jail, dissecting-room, or fever-stricken hovel, where they have been studying Life, as they call it? This is not the worst. Miss Catawber, who published a volume of exquisite poems, and had to pay fifty-seven pounds when the first edition came out, tells me that she has often dined at her publishers', Messrs. Crust and Buttermore's, on days when these literary lions were fed. She says that the lives they lead are frightful, and that gambling, drinking, and insolvency are the most venial of their crimes. You will be sure to meet these "lions" at Mr. De Fytchett's, who has written several pamphlets himself, and is a great admirer of the *belles lettres;* so also am I, in their proper place. I see you, in imagination, the object of the "lions'" murmured comments and sneers in our good friend's tasteful salons. If I had my legs and ten thousand a year, not an author should ever get farther than the mahogany bench in the hall the while I entered my name in the subscription-list for his next book, and the footman kept watch to see that he didn't run away with the cloaks and umbrellas. But this sheet is full. Beware of literary people, and believe me to be always your affectionate

CONSTANTIA CHESTERFIELD.

LETTER THE THIRD.

ON THE ART AND MYSTERY OF DRESS.

You have sent me, darling, a copy of an absurd book called, "Nothing to Wear." It is vulgar, impertinent, and does not contain any information. I have given it to Shanko Fanko, my page, as from its very dulness it is not likely to be injurious to the morals of that depraved boy,—who will certainly be hanged if he continues the study of the atrocious "Little Warblers." I have ordered Tummiss, our confidential man, to box the young wretch's ears if he catches him humming an objectionable song about "Sally come up, and Sally come down"—a low, Radical libel on his Grace the Duke of B—, again. I do not wish to part with Shanko Fanko, who, although I fear he will one day lose his life by the hands of the public executioner, is useful to me in a hundred ways, and bears the irritability of an invalid much better than a woman could do. Only those who have been desperately ill, and for a long time, know what intolerable tyranny one woman can inflict on another. My dear, I have had Griffins to wait upon me. Thank goodness they are monsters, and wellnigh fabulous; but they do, nevertheless, make their appearance sometimes, and worry our lives out.

To return. In the letter accompanying your parcel, you inclose several newspaper-cuttings having reference to the Fashions for November, and which, so far as I am enabled to judge, are extracted from that entertaining hebdomadal

publication the "Illustrated London News." I also find in your letter some neat pen-and-ink sketches of the present fashions for ladies, which, from the thinness of the paper, the decision of the outline, the stereotyped expression of the countenances portrayed, and the rigidity of the drapery, I shrewdly suspect you have traced from the engraved designs in *Le Follet* or the *Courrier des Dames*—those triumphs of the modish pencils of M. Compte Calix and Madame Anaïs Toudouze. You fill, moreover, four sides of note-paper—which I perceive you have of the new mauve colour—with critical dissertations on the costumes of the numerous young lady acquaintance you have already been enabled to form under the auspices of our excellent De Fytchett. You overwhelm your mamma with questions *in re vestiariâ*—you will excuse my quoting a little bit of Latin now and then. I do so less from vanity at having received a somewhat masculine education than from veneration for the memory of Sir Charles, who had the highest respect for the classics, and was indeed compelled to use the Latin language in his——but no matter. You wish me to tell you what you should wear; how you are to wear it; what colours are most suitable for your complexion; what textures are best at this season. You expect me to be an authority on crinoline considered in its relation to corded petticoats; on coutil corsets versus the orthodox structures of jean and whalebone; on cavalier hats as against gipsy broad-brims, and on those last again in their reference to bonnets more or less off the head. I am to tell you how best to "do" your hair; what ornaments it may be becoming for you to assume; what length of sleeve; what amplitude of skirt will suit you best; how you are to dress in the morning; how in the afternoon, how in the evening, and how again on the morning afterwards. My dear, what should an invalid old woman know about the present fashions? In my time

no human beings ever dressed like the engravings in the fashion-books, and I have not so mean an opinion of my species as to believe that any woman who is not an idiot would dress in exact accordance with those preposterous pictures, now.

Still I must do my best to instruct you in the art and mystery of dress. I can bring to the task only a considerable experience and knowledge of the world of fashion antecedent to my being bedridden; together with a considerable acquaintance with books—not altogether fashion-books, my dear,—and a lively verbal memory. Your papa was often good enough to compliment me on that which he was pleased to call my accurate and refined taste in matters of dress; and even at this day, when a nightcap and bedgown are my most appropriate wear, I am fond enough of criticising the dresses of those who visit me; of inquiring how sleeves are worn, and what collars are likely to be in vogue next spring. For though the majority of my visitors are as old and wellnigh as antiquated as I am, it will sometimes happen that one of my faithful dowagers or duennas will enter the back drawing-room, where I lie on the sofa, with a whole troop of blooming girls after her. I love to look on their fresh young faces, and active, albeit awkward, forms; to hear their ringing healthy voices; to mark what delight they take in displaying their little bits of finery. I know they look upon me as a poor, tumbledown, worn-out ruin; but why should I not take a pleasure in seeing them frolic and gambol by my moss-grown side? Dear girl, who cannot feel that pleasure of contemplation, and reflective participation in the joys of youth, so exquisitely embodied by Alfred Tennyson in his "Talking Oak?" Yes, we are ruinous and moss-grown; yes, we are hoary and gnarled, and our boughs shall bear the green, green leaves and tender shoots no more; already the woodman has notched us for-

felling, and the head-forester condemned us with critical eye. If the trunk indeed be mercifully left standing—half in pride, half in pity—to show what was once the glory of the green wood, the strong limbs have been one by one lopped off and carted away. To-morrow they will lay the axe to the root of the tree, and, the pettiest ramifications grubbed up, the turf will grow where once the brave oak stood. Be kind to us, O ye acorns that have taken root, and are rearing yourselves around! But while the gnarled trunk remains, and is animate and can talk, it can feel its pleasures — can discourse on the lovers' vows it has heard exchanged beneath its spreading branches; the furtive kisses snatched while each rustle of the leaves brought a blush to the maid's cheeks, and made even the man start and look round; the charming quarrels, the more charming reconciliations, the sighs and tears, the smiles and silver laughter that mingled as the water-drops mingle with the pebbles in the mountain streamlet. But the ruins are inanimate, my dear, and the oaks cannot talk in the grove or the wild flowers on the mountain crag. In that indefinable yearning for communion with alien things, to know the speech of the birds, to fathom the mystery of the beasts, to interpret the voice of the waves—nay, to penetrate that which the wind says in the stormy night, and to disclose of what import is the muttering of the stones beneath the tread of feet and the pressure of wheels; in that persistent craving to Know More which possesses all humanity, and makes it hopeful even while it renders it uneasy and dissatisfied, it would be an inestimable boon if we could become acquainted with the things that have occurred on that coveted spot of ground, or round about that mass of crumbling masonry. But the dust is silent, my child, and the stones must be for ever dumb.

Many years ago, toiling up the worn steps of a turret of

Netley Abbey, and gazing from the summit—now at the blue Southampton Water, dotted by white sails—now at the sward beneath, cumbered with the grey ruin of the Abbey as with the tombstones of dead ages—I thought, "Could but those stones speak!" How many prayers, swelling in solemn Gregorian chant, buoyed up by the pealing organ, have floated through that great window's tracery! There was the kitchen! See the black, charred, sooty wreck of the chimney. In that shattered refectory, by that chimney side, Henry's ruthless commissioners may have sate on their work of spoliation. Never more shall the grass Abbey resound to the tread of the sandalled monks. Never more shall the flames leap up that blackened chimney. Stands there a fragment of wall, anywhere in Netley, I wonder, within whose thickness a craven monk false to his vows was built up centuries ago? Fancy the half sportive, half scientific hammer of a geologist, seeking to discover what influences of petrifaction ages have had on the stern-ribbed mortar, loosening a stone—the stone loosening others, the fatal Cavity standing discovered; and, crouching, skull to kneebones, thumbs and grisly fingers still intertwined as in his last agony the dreadful Skeleton. By his side is the earthen pitcher, intact, defying Time, as earthen pots can only do; but the water it once held long since dried up—unless, indeed, with the scant morsel of bread, he swallowed both greedily in the first day of captivity. He had gnawed, perhaps in despairing hunger, the cord that bound his waist. Fibres of hemp yet adhere to the fleshless jaws. Christ's cross and the beads of his scapulary—the thread that held them rotted—lie in a little heap at his feet. Tatters of monastic clothing drop off when the bones are moved, and with the finger you may brush away the ring of soft, brown, dead hair that encircles his tonsured skull. Yes; this must have been

a monk;—and, ah! forgive a poor old woman's day dream. It is so many years since I clomb the worn stairs, and looked on the grey ruin and the blue estuary. But then I wished the crumbling stones to tell me tales of days gone by, and wondered if those wrecks were sentient, and felt pleasure to hear the footsteps and laughing prattle of the lads and lasses who had come to Netley for a gay picnic——which brings me by the most natural transition in the world to the great subject of bonnets, and to the infinitely greater subject of CRINOLINE.

Louisa, I am sixty; and I was just your age when I happened to be staying on a visit to Captain Boomer of the Royal Navy, who had something to do with Portsmouth Dockyard—victualling people, I think. Our good host and hostess brought a party of us girls, with a middy or two, a captain out of the garrison, two raw ensigns from the Hampshire Militia, and a French officer—Colonel de la Blaguetonnière, who had lived a long time at Winchester on parole, and at the Peace did not care to go back to his own country—over from Portsmouth for a day's picnicking at Netley Abbey. Yes; it was the autumn of the year 1817. We came over to Southampton in the Port Admiral's yacht, the sweetest little cutter that ever was seen. There were the Misses Hardy—the rich retired purser's daughters from Southsea, bold, forward, handsome girls, whose papa used to horsewhip them, and always gave them to understand that they were to have twenty thousand pounds apiece to their fortunes when they married; only he died just before Jess Hardy had ordered Captain Jolly of the Marines to marry her; and then it was discovered that poor dear Mr. Hardy was dreadfully in debt to the Government, who seized everything; and the girls had to go out governessing, and died, every one of them, the crossest of old maids. There was handsome Mrs. Lintot, with her hat

and feathers, and her amber satin pelisse. She came, herself, of a high family, but had married Mr. Lintot, the colonial merchant—wholesale grocer, they used to call it then—of Milk Street, Cheapside. She was supposed to be hopelessly in love with the Prince Regent, to whom she had been introduced by Sir William Curtis at a Mansion House ball, during the visit of the Allied Sovereigns in '14; but on his Royal Highness neglecting to notice her one day, in 1816, when he was driving a curricle on the Cliff at Brighton, she went quite over to the other side, and afterwards, in 1821, was one of the ladies of England who went up with an Address to Queen Caroline of Brunswick, at Brandenburgh House, Hammersmith. Mr. Lintot died of the commercial crisis of 1825, and Mrs. Lintot re-married—who would have thought it? though I always had my suspicions—Captain Jolly of the Marines. He went out to Jamaica, where he had some negroes and sugar canes, and died of the yellow fever; and his widow having sold her plantation and slaves at a great price, became a fervent abolitionist, corresponded with Mr. Brougham and Mr. Zachary Macaulay—the father of the historian of England—and married, *for the third time*, the Reverend Silas Bumpus, the Methodist Missionary who was so nearly hanged for fomenting an insurrection among the misguided blacks—(who were a great deal better treated, my dear, in their worst times, than many labourers and domestic servants in England, and did not get a bit more beating than was good for them) —and who afterwards went out to India and immortalised his name in connection with Suttee and the Temple of Juggernaut. Mrs. Lintot wrote a book while in India, called "Chutnee, Curry and Thuggee," and died only last year at this very Pumpwell. She had buried her husband many years before at Cowadapore, and in her last moments made a dead set at the hand of Admiral Shroudesley Shovel. There

are some women who will never be satisfied with any number of wedding-rings under a bushel.

How we were dressed on the auspicious occasion of our picnic at Netley you may imagine, my dear, from a reference to the little pencil drawing, which with a trembling hand I have sketched out for you. Put it in your album; years hence the *croquis* may prove a curiosity to your children, if the fashion-books of 1817 are inaccessible to them. Indeed, I think those same books full of coloured engravings ought to be burnt in iron cages at stated periods, like the paid-in notes of the Bank of England, in order that we might not have to blush in after life for the egregious follies in costume we perpetrated in our youth. When I look at the modern dress and bonnet of a friend pretty well advanced in years, I can scarcely realise to myself the possibility of her, and of I, ever having worn the astonishing garments I can remember so distinctly. And young as you are, dear, who would dream of dressing a child in 1859 as you were dressed a dozen years since? So you see us all as we were on the sward at Netley forty-one years since;—in the days we wore no crinoline, a long time ago. There are Masters Reefer and Hawsehole, the middies, with their Byron collars, their dirks and tagged hats, such as Shanko Fanko my page wears to-day. There is Captain Sappin of the Buffs, with his epaulettes—there are no epaulettes now—his swallow-tailed coat—they have now put the Buffs into tunics, like little boys—and the long feather swaggering over his shako. There are Ensigns Chopstick and Grounter, of the H. Militia, in cocked hats, white turn-backs, kerseymere smalls and gaiters. And the girls! and the ladies! Look at Mrs. Lintot, with her hat and feathers, and her eternal amber satin pelisse. Look at the three Misses Hardy, with their coal-scuttle bonnets, their lavender boots, their short sleeves,

and their waists underneath their armpits. Look at her who was once Constance Sevignier, and is now poor old Lady Chesterfield, with a vandyked robe, a coral necklace, a little boa—my chest was always delicate, my love—a muff, long gloves, and a sash. Yes; I assure you I have worn all these things. I have worn, besides, a gipsy hat, to see it abandoned, and then brought into fashion again twenty years afterwards; worn a leghorn hat with a monstrous superstructure of gauze, bows and artificial flowers, and broad streamers of ribbon that hung down like the crisscross pendants of a Cardinal's hat. Worn a hat with a turned-up brim, a stove-pipe tube and a bell crown, with a cockade at the side like that of an officer's groom. Worn a beaver bonnet, a "Persian head-dress," and turban (at evening parties), with a bird of paradise or a marabout feather stuck in it. Worn boots with fur round the tops, Polish boots, bronze boots, white satin boots, shoes with crossed sandals, and open-worked stockings. Worn skirts that dragged on the ground, and skirts that ended an inch above my ankles. Worn short sleeves, long sleeves, full sleeves, light sleeves, Bishop sleeves, leg-of-mutton sleeves—the grovelling menfolk, true to their creed in earthly things, have lately assumed them for trousers, and call them "pegtops"—Mameluke sleeves, hanging sleeves, and scarcely any sleeves at all. Worn cloaks, mantillas, pelisses, scarfs, capes, pelerines, jackets, rough coats, burnouses, and shawls. Worn gloves that came to the elbows, and lace tippets with ends that reached to the feet. Carried fans, muffs, reticules, *sacs;* pockets before and pockets behind; purses in the bosom and purses in the hand. Known the time when it was fashionable or unfashionable to display the gold watch and seals of which one's husband had made one a present. Worn plain collars, worked collars, no collars at all; black velvet bands, ribbons

tied in bows, victorines, berthes, lappets, cuffs, bracelets—now two on each arm, now three on one and none on the other—sleeve buttons, mittens, fur gloves, cameos, garnet brooches, crosses, true-lover's knots, golden arrows, Brighton pebbles, chatelaines—with miniature gridirons, tea-kettles, and flat-irons; long parasols, short parasols—some with fringe and some without, some lined with satin and some covered with lace. Worn dresses that mounted to the throat, and dresses that slid off the shoulders; worn falls and tuckers, and chemisettes, and ruches and drawn bodies and stomachers, and any number of flowers, and pink slips, and barége skirts, and dress-improvers, and twilled aprons, and three tucks—worn, in short, and in my time, hundreds of variations of that tune which Folly and Vanity have been playing for five thousand years on the first simple *motivo* of our grandmother Eve's vestment of fig-leaves. Crinoline was coming in, and it was beginning to be observed that the Paris cab-horses were losing their tails from the increased demand for horsehair, when I was taken away from the world and cast, fettered, on to the sofa here.

I remember the first symptoms of the crinoline malady and mania. Crinoline has nothing whatsoever to do with the hoops and paniers that our great-great-grandmothers wore under their brocaded dresses with the sharply-peaked stomachers. The detestable structures of cane and whalebone in which our servant-maids spend their wages, in order that they may distend their dresses to the similitude of hen-coops, are not crinoline properly so called, and the name has been impertinently arrogated for such substitutes. The original crinoline was in the first an aggravation of the "dress-improver," or bustle. Bustles themselves, I dare say, are not much younger than Noah's ark; but our modern bustle dates from the time of the Hottentot Venus, who was exhibited at the

Egyptian Hall some half-score years before you were born. Previous to this time we had attired ourselves in the sham-classical manner so greatly favoured by the Emperor Napoleon Buonaparte, his chief painter M. David, and his chief actor M. Talma. Till long after the Peace of '15 we wore short waists, narrow skirts—were as flat, laterally and otherwise, as pancakes, and sat on hard chairs and settees, with slim, carved, uncomfortable legs of classical design. This was the "Style Empire" in dress and furniture. Madame Récamier, Lady Morgan, Lady Caroline Lamb, the Duchesse de Berri, Lady Jersey, Lady Conyngham, the gorgeous Pauline Borghese (a Buonaparte), Madame Catalani, Miss Stephens—you may see her portrait, she is now a Dowager Countess, in Harlowe's picture of the Trial of Queen Catherine—all the great beauties, and leaders and followers of fashion of the first score years of the century, wore this long, narrow-skirted, short-waisted, pancake-flattened, hideous classical costume. Caroline of Brunswick, a large-boned woman, and given, moreover, to corpulence, amplified this long narrow sack dress by means of a loose over-pelisse. She widened herself at the top with a hat and feathers; but it was the advent of the Hottentot Venus that caused things to be widened at the other extremity. That sable phenomenon, whose skeleton is now in the Museum of Comparative Anatomy at the Jardin des Plantes, Paris, was blessed with a most remarkable rotundity of person. She had, perhaps, the largest natural bustle that ever was known; and the English ladies, long since doomed to and groaning under the tyranny of flat pancake skirts, envied the breadth of beam of her who had come for fashion's good from Caffraria's sultry climes. The Hottentot's rotundity became the rage. The Venus visited Paris—she died there, I believe, poor over-fed creature—and there received the *cachet* of the Archpriestesses of fashion.

The bustle was, if not invented, at least re-discovered, and soon obtained astonishing vogue. It was at first a species of pillow-roll, or pudding, stuffed and covered, and secured round the waist with strings. Of course, like everything else that we poor oppressed women choose to wear, in order to adorn our persons for the delectation of the Tyrant Man, the satirical gentlemen soon had their fling at the bustle. Mr. Theodore Crookback wrote some cruel, laughable couplets about it; Mr. Cruikshank caricatured it in his funny, wicked etchings; and the people at the playhouses took it off in the pantomimes. Everything great and good has so been satirised and turned into ridicule. The bustle came out of the ordeal triumphant. Ladies dropped it sometimes in the street, and rude boys picking it up made jokes upon it; but it survived even that injury. Little by little it began to be admitted that the bustle was a marvellous improvement to the set of the folds of ladies' drapery, and that while it confirmed amplitude it could give grace and elegance of form. Gradually, too, people discovered that it was not absolutely necessary that the "dress-improver" should be a stuffed pillow or pudding, and that a structure of horsehair, buckram, or some equally stiff material, would answer the purpose of distending the garments quite as well. There was a long and fierce combat between the semi-rigid fabrics, but horsehair had the best of it in the long run; and that horsehair, my dear, is no other than the now world-famous crinoline.

The horsehair bustle assumed a new phase of expansion in the shape of one, two, or more tiers of puffs, beneath which extended downwards a row of semicircular volutes, or columnar corrugations. The whole fabric resembled equally a horsehair Dutch-oven, and that curious wooden screen placed on the stage behind the footlights at the Opera-house to shelter the musical prompter. I mentioned, I think, a

Dutch-oven; and *àpropos* of that passing allusion to the products of Holland, I may remark, that the Dutch young ladies have from the first repudiated crinoline and set its ordinances at naught, claiming, indeed, a remote and ancestral priority of natural rotundity over the Hottentot Venus, and placing their faith implicitly, when nature fails them, in the virtues of an extra half-dozen of linsey-wolsey petticoats, placed one over the other. Those horsehair volutes below the puffs of the dress-improver grew, and grew, till they reached the feet, attained the entire circumference of the body, and burst upon the world as a complete undergarment of crinoline. I should have been well satisfied if the movement had stopped here. The crinoline, *pur et simple,* is an admirable supporter, amplifier, and draper, throwing the dress into those sharp, light, and shadow-giving folds that look so well in a picture. When I entreat you, my dear girl, to beware of and to avoid crinoline as it is at present used or abused, you must not for a moment imagine that I wish to raise my hand against the original *cotillon* of horsehair. It has made, in its time, many appallingly awkward women look tolerable, and many handsome women more graceful still. Girls of fifteen or sixteen are all the better for a little crinoline. Their figures are generally as unformed as those of young colts or young heifers; they seldom know how to walk, or how to carry their arms, or how to preserve their centres of gravity when standing still; and the sway and swell of the crinoline help and compensate for their undecided gait. A married woman is unquestionably benefited by crinoline in moderation. It tones down the sometimes too prominent self-assertion of her walk—many married ladies positively swagger;—and, by a reflex action, it frequently lends her dignity and *pose,* when, as is sadly the case, the woman has been bullied

or neglected by her husband into a jaded, listless, dejected slattern.

Many a man spoils his wife's figure, and treads her shoes down at heel, before he breaks her heart. First, the shabby shawl, the bonnet all awry, the hair crammed into a net instead of being neatly "done,"—and then, separate maintenance and Sir Cresswell Cresswell, and all the rest of it. Finally, dignified old ladies may wear crinoline—tall old ladies, mind—just as they may wear diamonds or turbans. But for short and pudgy people to convert themselves into the likenesses of tombolas, is to me utterly egregious and preposterous. To see a dumpy woman in crinoline—there was one here yesterday for an hour and a half—reminds me of one of the "cheeses" we girls used to make before the age of crinoline, in the school-room. Very young ladies, I have remarked, may occasionally stand in need of a little horsehair; that is, if they have to go out into the great world to see and to be seen; but to a well-grown girl from seventeen to twenty, I think crinoline is a detraction rather than an augmentation of elegance. She is in the pride of her beauty. She is as the three-year-old that can run but for one Derby in her lifetime. She feels her life in every limb. Men like to see her paces; her canters and gallops. It is a positive sin and shame to prison her up in the diving-bell of crinoline. My dear girl, lay this well to heart: that when men see a young handsome woman arrayed in exaggerated crinoline, they will, in nine cases out of ten, assume that she has some defect to hide, some deformity to bolster up; and, judging of the entirety by the part, believe, that even the real natural advantages she possesses are tricked and furbished up by adventitious means. Plenty of material in a dress, plenty of underskirts—a corded or a stout twill petticoat if need be, but an infinitesimal quantity

of horsehair or buckram—those are my prescriptions and recommendations to you, O my Louisa, in this most vital of matters.

Remember—I am an old woman, and may be prejudiced. My toleration of crinoline extends no further than the horse-hair garment, or, at the most, the thinnest barricading of watchspring, distending in progressive tiers the muslin petticoat. But I do most thoroughly and entirely denounce the hideous "skeletons" of tape and iron, the monstrous hoops of whalebone and basket-work, the lumbering bird-cages and hen-coops, and rat-traps and many-hooped casks that the vain, the dull, or the vicious are parading themselves about in. I care not whether these ultra crinolines are worn by duchesses or by the daughters of sin and shame; I say, that besides being ugly and absurd, they are revoltingly indecent. I tremble when I see them. I shudder when they turn the corner, and the hussies that wear them—hussies in carriages and hussies on foot—go by. Shanko Fanko, on days when I am comparatively free from pain, wheels the sofa to the window, and I can see them, and be amazed and ashamed. I grow into such a rage that I ring furiously for Shanko Fanko to pull the blinds down. I declare that the wearing of these monstrosities is a scandal and a disgrace to Englishwomen who call themselves virtuous and modest. I declare that crinoline—exaggerated crinoline—ought to be put down by Act of Parliament; and I promise you, Louisa, that if ever I hear, through the medium of any of the numerous little birds of my acquaintance, of your appearance in public with an undue amount of crinoline, that I will have you back to Pumpwell-le-Springs, and sentence you to pickling, preserving, and serious novel-reading for the rest of your natural life.

But my dear girl will attend to her mamma's behests.

She will remember that she is young and good-looking, and that she stands in no need of these imbecile figments. A ray of consolation breaks in upon me, too, when I read, towards the end of your letter, that the abuse of crinoline shows signs of diminution in the very best society. It is not nearly so much worn in London this autumn, you say, as it was at Pumpwell during the summer. Oh! goodness grant that such may be the fact; and may the Shadow of Crinoline grow small by degrees and beautifully less. Meanwhile, my darling, till bustles come in again, bless you! Remember, no stint of length to your dresses. Tell Madame Shickster—to whom, I am delighted to hear, Mrs. de Fytchett has taken you—to make your dresses *full*. Plenty of skirt, my own one, but no metallic machines to break my heart and bruise your partner's shins in dancing.

CONSTANCE CHESTERFIELD.

LETTER THE FOURTH.

TREATS OF BOYS AND GIRLS, AND THEIR DIVERS METHODS OF "CARRYING ON."

LOUISA! I am positively shocked at you. Your last letter runs but upon one subject—the gentlemen. The odious menfolk occupy more than three parts of your epistle to me. You have been but three weeks under the kind custody of Amelia-Charlotte—(she owes me a letter, and if she does not write to me soon I shall quarrel with her)—and your talk is only of the two-legged, whiskered creatures who drop in at morning calls and to lunch; whom you meet in Regent Street and at the Covent Garden Opera—(is this Mr. Harrison so handsome as I hear he is? and does Miss Louisa Pyne really so much resemble Her Majesty Queen Victoria as they say?); who come to dinner, or to evening parties whither you go afterwards. Your heart, you say, is still entirely your own. Is there not a tiny portion of it in the custody of the long-moustachioed gentleman with the gold locket and the fusee-box to his watchguard, whom you met in the railway train? and did not the brougham and the Skye terrier run away with the affections of Louisa Chesterfield as rapidly as Pluto did with Proserpine, or Claude Melnotte with Pauline Deschapelles? My dear, beware of love at first sight! As well buy a horse from seeing him canter along Rotten Row. He may have a vice, for all his sleek coat and arched neck, and be only fit for a riding-

master's screw, or the shafts of a Hansom cab. I can see, however, that you have quite enough of your heart left to catalogue, and make much of the various gentlemen you have met, to the minutest point of detail in their appearance and demeanour. You describe them to me —now in a graphic, now in a sarcastic, now in an enthusiastic manner. Bless you, my girl! you have your mother's discrimination and—though I say it—appreciation of humour. But you should be chary of enthusiasm. Remember what wise Prince Talleyrand said: *Point de Zèle.* I don't want you to be cold or indifferent, but you should not be fervent. Haven't you seen people in the stalls of the Opera let Bosio's most delicious *morceau* in the Traviata go by without clapping their hands? A languid inclination of the head, a "*Brava!*" simpered between the teeth, a transient agitation of the fan, will be sufficient. You have heard poor dear Bosio, child! I have heard PASTA! These ears have listened to Malibran; this sense has hung, spell-bound, on the accents of the delicious Giulia Grisi in the morning of her fame. It was considered ill-breeding at the King's Theatre to applaud. We shrugged our shoulders and shook our furbelows, in approbation, and left the Pit and Gallery to make the noise.

'Tis a safe way of getting through life. When amateurs showed Sir Joshua their pencil drawings, he murmured, "Pretty, pretty!" When stage-struck heroes recited before John Kemble, he wagged his head, and made a chuckling noise. So, dispraising nobody, these great and eminently respectable artists offended nobody, without praising anybody. Ask Smirkly, the reviewer, if there be any good in savagely cutting up people's books or pictures, and making five hundred enemies to earn five pounds. You needn't praise or abuse the thing. Say "pretty, pretty," in print; spare all the parts that deserve animadversion, but don't say

a word of the things that merit eulogium, and the book or the picture will fall by itself, without impairing one whit your character, Smirkly, of being the best-natured of mortals. Smirkly, who is going out to St. Kitt's, shortly, as Treasurer to the Banjo Department, one of the few sinecures remaining in the gift of the Colonial Secretary, used to dine with poor Sir Charles often.

It has been said that the noblest study of mankind is man, and some facetious philosopher has added a gloss to the saying, and read it us—that man's noblest study is woman. This is true enough, I dare say, if men would only act on the advice given to them; but for my part I doubt whether men study women, in their persons or their characters, half so much as they should do. There is still, I take it, a fine brutishness and obtuse dulness about those overrated creatures, rendering them unconscious and careless of the feminities going on around them. They have passions, my love, often quite unreasoning and swinish; mere appetites for a woman's voice, or for the tunes she plays, or the curries and puddings she makes; and when these passions are aroused, they pursue and vanquish, or are foiled. The hobbledehoy, on his promotion from his crammers to an Indian cadetship, the ensign in his first tunic, the lad just gone up to the university, may be taken with very simple bait—a neat boot and a well-drawn stocking on a wet day, the way in which Charlotte cuts bread and butter, or the girl in the refreshment-room pours out the lemonade—and their simple hearts are led captive in a moment. I have known youths of the most honourable families bring home wives without shoes and stockings, or a second frock; or write to their mammas to say, with their dutiful love, that they have married Molly Mogg, the alehouse-keeper's daughter. The boys do this at seventeen, and the old men do it at seventy-two; and there

is about as much real love at the one age as at the other. They have simply indulged an appetite in making fools of themselves, just as they would take twice pie or more *suprême*, and they wake up the next morning after the dinner or the honeymoon, repentant and ashamed.

When girls throw themselves away it is not for appetite: that is often the last thing which enters their silly little heads. 'Tis more through a mistaken enthusiasm, a sentimental conclusion based on false deductions, an accumulation of antecedents that do not, and should not, and cannot, although they seem to make—you have read Dr. Watts's logic—a consequent. Then, with wailing and bitter tears, they discover that they have been deceived. Even foolish old maids who abandon their hands and fortunes to swindlers and rascals, are, when not blinded by mere vanity—in which state of cecity all women are hopeless—usually led into error by the false assumption of the existence of some noble or estimable quality in the rascals they wed, and give them credit for generosity or talent which the knaves do not possess. The only incorrigibly unconscionable women, in matters of wedlock, are mature widows, too old for sentiment and too old for the resignation of solitude, who almost offer themselves for sale; who fling themselves, their dividends, and their houses full of furniture, at the head of the first man they meet at a theatre, a lecture-room, or a boarding-house dinner-table, and who, I believe, would marry Mephistophiles himself if he rolled up his tail out of sight, and brought a curly wig well down over his horns. These are the widows who are picked up off the carpet, as it were, by scoundrels whose profession is bigamy; who make love with the deaf and dumb alphabet from second-floor windows, and bribe the butcher-boy to deliver *billet-doux* with the mutton chops. The men they wed generally mingle swindling with

treachery, and the wind up of the lamentable drama of the "Widow Bewitched" is an *éclaircissement* at Bow Street, when Captain de Montmouncy turns out to be Jack Higgins the ticket-of-leave man, and his four wives are present, three anxious to prove that the others are not married women, and the fourth or first, the real wife, only wishing that somebody had come before her, too, and that she had not gone to church with the Wretch.

I have treated, designedly, of so many exceptional cases among our sex; for I wish to maintain that the very great majority of sensible, well-conducted young women invert the poetical counsel I have noted, and make of Man their noblest study. Men are too ignorant, vain, pre-occupied by matters of money or ambition, and moreover they are too shy, to study woman properly, or to put the result of their experience into practice. You know I always except *les passionnés*, who run at a woman's heart like a bull at a gate, and tear and trample it down with hoof and horn, in the persistence of their mad but fixed desire; and again, I make exception for those endowed with that curious mental and physical organisation possessed by the Lauzuns, the Richelieus, the Count Horns, the Lord Lytteltons of history; the Lovelaces, the Faublas, the Don Juans of fiction; and especially by that famous Colonel Aaron Burr, of mingled fiction and romance, who is the sub-hero of prudish Mrs. Stowe's last romance, the "Minister's Wooing," and who in sober reality, an American friend tells me, used to say that he considered the systematic seduction of a woman a thing more to be desiderated, and more to be gloried in when accomplished, than the winning of the greatest battle of Cæsar or Napoleon. To such men-demons as these every woman is a fortress that is to be circumvallated, undermined, trenched, bombarded, starved or betrayed into surrender if

possible, and, as a last resource, stormed. When they have taken the citadel, they wear the colours on their sleeves, boast of their conquest for a while, then, in the mere wantonness of possession, level the fortification, rase bastion and donjon, and let who will plough up the site and sow it with salt. And I warn those who are being cajoled into surrender at the eleventh hour, that these besiegers *never* observe the terms of the capitulation they so solemnly swear to, and that the fall of the "city of the violated treaty" is as nothing compared with the lot of one of these. There is an old French proverb, "*Château qui parle est près de se rendre.*" It answers to a true Italian one, "*Donna baciata è a mezza guadagnata.*" Don't parley, then, O you foolish young creatures, when Lord Lovelace comes a-wooing. Don't take Judas's kiss or Aaron Burr's compliments, or it will be the worse for you. You will never drive the besieger away, or under an honourable capitulation march out with drums beating or colours flying.

Happily, accomplished villains such as these are rare indeed. With any plentiful admixture of Lovelaces, Burrs, and Lauzuns, the world would be impossible, and society intolerable. Thank goodness for the shyness of most men. 'Tis true that the predominance of this last otherwise excellent quality might bring about some difficulties, but for a wise provision. If Jemmy is too shy to tell Jenny that he loves her, and if the delicate reticence of Jenny's sex prevents Jenny from telling Jemmy that she loves him, why, the matrimonial registrar might as well shut up shop; parish clerks, beadles, and pew-openers take to some new calling, and the "Order for the Solemnisation," &c., be expunged from the Prayer-book. But there comes the wisdom of the saving clause and safety-valve; and through its operation the boys and girls are relieved from the unpleasant chance of

passing the best time of their lives like the male and female scholars in a charitable institution—under the same roof certainly, but separated from one another by strong walls and high partitions—or from bobbing, and advancing, and receding in a distressing manner, like the shaking Quakers at dancing-service.

A thoroughly shy man is a hopelessly dumb dog, as less an animal as a Dutch pug in Dresden china. He is too shy to speak, too shy to write, too shy to speak to the girl's mother; and when he can muster up courage to move her sister, or a female friend, to intercede in his behalf with the object of his adoration, he generally explains his meaning in so awkward and ambiguous a manner, that the ambassador frequently takes the declaration to herself. A common and futile expedient of the shy man is to bribe the waiting-maid, who pockets his douceurs, laughs at him, tells the baker all about his passion, describes him as a mean-spirited ninny to her young mistress, and plays into the hands of his rivals. I knew a woman of the world, of very great experience in marrying matters, who got seven daughters off, my dear, in three years and eight months. One married a peer of the realm; and Lucy's husband was high in the Direction of the late East India Company, and used to depose Indian kings and rajahs at dinner time, whose dominions, when in a generous mood, he sometimes restored to them at dessert over the port wine and filberts, telling them to be good boys and not skin bayaderes alive any more. This excellent mother and manager, whom I will call the Honourable Mrs. Metternick, once told me that an excellent plan to adopt in urging a *parti* to a declaration, when he was seemingly irrecoverably shy, was to employ some judicious young male friend—if in the army it were preferable, as they understand so well the management of these affairs at mess—to make the

amorous but too modest swain tipsy with good, sound, generous Burgundy, and then push him into the drawing-room where his fair one was sitting. Younger sisters and children can always quit, or be sent out of the room on some pretence. This method she had tried, or advised the trial of in many cases, with signal success; yet even Mrs. Metternick was obliged to admit that occasional and disastrous failure had followed the adoption of the expedient. The shy man sometimes gets *too tipsy*, says too much, does too much, makes a dreadful *fiasco* of it in short, and is discarded as an intoxicated reprobate, when he is only the meekest and mildest of lambs, with a little too much dew off the daisies in his head.

No, no; try *my* specific, or rather observe the working of our bounteous matchmaker, Nature's remedy. 'Tis in the girl to do it. Ah, Miss Innocence! Ah, Miss Modesty! Ah, Miss Unsophisticated! — not Miss Affectation — *you* overdo and spoil your work. Ah, Miss Rural! it is in your power to let Simple Simon know that you love him, and embolden the bashful youth to tell *his* love. And there are a thousand little artless ways in the girl's power to bring about this desirable consummation without derogating one iota, one pin-point, one hair's breadth, from that maidenly modesty and sweet shrinking-back, without which a girl had much better be a ballet-dancer or a painter's model at once. You can tell him; you can let him know; you can teach him his A B C, and so on right through the accidence, without his ever dreaming that the blushing young lady before him is Dame Hornbook, the schoolmistress of Cupid's academy. You can do it with a smile, a sigh, a little tear falling on a locket, a reel of cotton dropped on the carpet, an odd glove, a stocking to be marked, and a finger *inadvertently* pricked, a picture in an album, a skein of silk to be wound, a letter to be directed, or a word to be looked out in the Italian dictionary. I have known it

accomplished by searching for the text at church, by breaking a bootlace in the street, by losing a spaniel puppy out of a pleasure-boat, by having a fly's leg in one's eye, or a wasp in the room. The electric spark is communicated; but 'tis the girl plays the battery. "I love you, dear." "You love me? then I have loved you for months." These pleasant reciprocities cross with the rapidity of telegraphic messages, and somehow, the next moment Jenny and Jemmy Jessamy have settled to be married (*P. et M. volente*) on Monday six weeks. Jemmy, the shyest man in the world, forthwith furnishes an imaginary house in Gloucester Gardens; and Jenny, the most innocent and retiring maiden in all Belgravia, trots away to order certain articles of millinery and dressmaking which she has had in her eye, and for this special purpose, any time this six months.

Ah! pleasant time of courting! Ah! happy pairing time! Ah! blissful season of billing and cooing, that can come but once in the life of man or woman! That mutual understanding just after a boy and girl have agreed to wed is one season of unmixed happiness out of about three joyful times that the good God grants us in our pilgrimage here below. The bliss of the wedding-day is not unmingled, but full of cares and groundless fears. The second season is when the first child is born—the third may be—but this, alas! is granted to but few of the children of humanity—when we can turn our face to the wall and wait for the cold visitor patiently and smiling, confident that the worst is past, and that only a little wading through the cold lake remains before we are landed safely on the golden shore, where He stands with outstretched arms to welcome us. But, ah! to few is the last pillow so smooth—to few is the last hour so tranquil. Let us still be thankful for those happy moments when we gaze in the eyes of those that love

us—eyes that look back love again; moments when the kind doctor holds the little babe to the weak, happy mother's breast; moments when the father looks at the fruit of his loins and thinks proudly, "This is my Son." It is as though the stern angel for once dropped his flaming sword, and suffered us to stroll for a short time within the well-guarded Eden, through whose railings we had often and vainly tried to peep, baffled by the umbrageous foliage, and persuading ourselves that we could hear, afar off, the silver singing of the birds. See! here we are, in Eden. Here is the meadow ever green. Here are the flowers that never fade; the ripple waters ever dancing and glittering in the eternal sun. Lo! yonder the lion is lying down by the lamb, and the dove comes and mirrors its white plumage in the sable jaguar's shiny coat. But, ah! behold the dreadful Tree—a flattened head, a beady eye, a forked tongue, a body in scaly whorls—come crawling through the flowers. The time of happiness is gone and past. The angel hurries up, brandishing the fiery glaive, and drives us out into the world again.

I remember a silly song, sung years ago—a sort of sentimentally-comic ditty, which could be given with the greatest propriety at evening parties—called, "Why don't the men propose?" My dear, half the men who are worth anything are too shy to propose. Of those who do pop the question, as the process is vulgarly but expressively called, fifty per cent. have sinister motives in asking the question the solution of which decides the happiness or misery of a girl. Why don't the girls propose, in the pretty modest manner I have pointed out? There would be fewer bleak old maids in the world if they would take heart of grace, and act according to the rules I have set down for them. Fewer cases of withered hearts, frost-bitten noses, and favourised macaws and petted tom-cats, would occur. When it comes to your time and turn, my

Louisa, do you propose as I have bidden you. But neither time nor turn is come yet, my dear. You must wait months, which are to a young girl years, and are as fraught with weighty experience, before you can be justified in giving your heart or your hand to a man; and yet it is full time that I should indicate your plan of action, show you your weapons, put you on your guard, and assure you of your strength, and of your adversary's weak points. Forewarned is forearmed, and, young as you are, it yet behoves you to be prepared for every eventuality. One never knows what may happen. Ere I quit this portion of the subject, however, let me tell you that I do not regard my system of *rapprochement* as absolute, or as infallible. Indeed, there are dreadful cases in which the one word requisite is never, never spoken. Sometimes the word that would give ineffable joy and gladness is half uttered, but the better moiety remains among the eternal silences of the soul. These are the worst cases of all. Men and women go on loving hopelessly, silently, for years, face to face, but with a dreary gulf between them—loving and despairing till they are grey-headed; loving and despairing till the passion grows implacable and vengeful, till the ripe fruit drops from the bough and moulders, and rots in the dust. Let me try to remember the old familiar lines from Christabel:—

> " They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
> Like cliffs which had been rent asunder;
> A dreary sea now flows between,
> But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
> Shall wholly do away, I ween,
> The marks of that which once hath been."

I have forgotten half of the lines, but have quoted enough to show you what I mean. And to think that a pair of nail-

scissors might have snipped this Gordian-knot, and a crochet-needle bridged across this yawning gulf, and a reel of cotton dropped on the carpet and picked up by a shy man in "peg-tops," have settled this woeful misunderstanding happily, at once and for ever!

By the way, Miss, you appear to be very learned on the "pegtop" theme. I do not object to you studying the extremities of the opposite sex with assiduity, for next to a man's heart and morals you should institute a rigid inquiry into the condition of his legs. A man may gain great victories, or suffer shameful defeat through his legs. Never mind the ridiculous American purists who are too modest to call a spade a spade, and a leg a leg, and nick-naming them "supporters," go straightway to devise the absurd and immodest Bloomer costume, giving rise, as it does, to ribald comments from men on a part of a lady's dress with which they have no business, and ought to know nothing about. But you are a brave English girl, and as you see hundreds of men's legs every day, you have a right to study, to observe, and to form your opinions on them. As a rule, good men have good legs. Crooked leg, crooked mind; that is one of my mottoes, and one which I have very seldom found to be faulty. Your dear papa had a prejudice against tailors. I am more tolerant; and yet I can't help thinking that they become morally warped from twisting their legs beneath them. What dreadful legs some of our most atrocious criminals have had! The infamous Burke, my dear, who pitch-plastered people to death before you were born, and sold their bodies to the surgeons, had the very worst pair of bow-legs that ever were seen. Look what spoiling their legs by sitting tailor-fashion has brought the Turks to. As a walking, free-legged people, they overran Asia, and conquered Constantinople; but they took to sitting cross-legged, and became a

mere effete, degenerate set of barbarians, squatting on their divans, smoking pipes and drinking coffee all day long; eating with their fingers; ordering poor creatures to be bastinadoed, if, indeed, they didn't have them bowstrung or decapitated; sewing up their wives, of whom they have a disgraceful number, in sacks, and throwing them into the Bosphorus. I don't like the Russians much; but if there be one thing that could reconcile me to their taking Constantinople, it would be the symmetrical legs, handsomely cut trousers, and beautiful patent-leather boots, which recent travellers assure us are such distinguished characteristics of the upper classes of Muscovites.

In my young days, a tight leg was a pretty accurate sign of a gentleman; in your young days, the loose, or "pegtop" leg, is fashionable. People who wear tight trousers now-a-days are either dancing-masters, waiters, actors, or sporting characters and prize-fighters, ostlers, and omnibus-conductors. But, ah me! what exquisitely-turned legs and feet I have seen in the days when the aristocracy wore white kerseymere smalls, silk stockings, and pumps. Such smalls, such stockings, such shoes wore my Lord Castlereagh, and Sir Thomas Lawrence—a man whose legs were fit for an emperor, as were his manners and deportment and genius, although he was but a west-country innkeeper's son. Such smalls wore M. de Châteaubriand, and Count Pozzo di Borgo, and Prince Metternich. Such smalls, albeit of a different fabric, wore his most sainted Majesty, our present Sovereign's revered uncle, King George the Fourth, your papa's monarch, patron, and friend. Ah, my dear, what a heart, what a leg, had that revered potentate! You know I have, in my front drawing-room here, a proof before letters of the now almost priceless engraving published by Colnaghi, of our best of princes in his beautiful curly head of hair, his frogged surtout, with the

fur collar and the star of the garter near his royal heart; his plump white hand—such a hand to kiss, love!—hanging over the sofa; the column and curtain behind him; the standish and pens by his side; and those immortal legs—one cinctured by the garter—encased in silk stockings, and finished by varnished pumps. It makes me weep even now, after all this lapse of time, to contemplate those blessed Legs! Could the balustrades on the terrace of the Queen of Sheba's palace ever have equalled those legs! Could the best piano-forte-legs turned in ebony, rose or walnut-wood in the establishments of Messrs. Erard, or Collard and Collard, come up to those unequalled terminations! They don't make such legs now naturally, although one of my yellow admirals, who was badly wounded in the knee-cap at Navarino, tells me that the Mr. Gray, of Cork Street, Burlington Gardens, London, whom I have already mentioned, is famous for making artificial limbs, and supplies to order, arms, legs, noses, ears, lips, almost everything, indeed, that one can have lost in war or through disease. During the Crimean campaigns Mr. Gray, so my yellow admiral says, was a perfect centipede in false legs; and now his legs go to Court, and mount on horseback, and polk, and waltz, and kick people downstairs. Heigho! Mr. Gray may be a clever man, but can he make me a new heart; can he, with all his cunning development of anatomical analogy, give me a counterpart of the organ that pulsated with hope and happiness in the days of smalls and pumps? I can no more, my dear; the memories of days for ever fled, and King George the Fourth's legs, are too much for your affectionate mother. Yet I like the present "pegtops," and think them becoming and manly, when they are not outrageously loose at the hips, and tight at the boot.

CONSTANTIA CHESTERFIELD.

LETTER THE FIFTH.

ON SHOPS AND SHOPPING.

Pumpwell-le-Springs.

I AM grieved to the heart to learn that the Influenza has one more victim in the person of kind Mrs. de Fytchett. She has kept her room, you say, for a week, and has taken no other nutriment than Van Gopus's Ermolina Sympathetica, the new "Food" which is to supersede arrowroot, sago, tapioca, and even our dear old Embden groats. My darling, I should wish you to take your mamma as an epistolary model, and shudder to use a harsh and unseemly word, but I am out of patience: I have a touch of my old rheumatism in addition to my other ailments; and I must say—Bother Van Gopus's Ermolina Sympathetica, and all other new "Foods," Revalentas, Ervalentas, and "entas" and "inas" in the advertising category! Perhaps I may exclude Brown and Polson's Corn Flour, which tiresome old General Gargall has taken with beneficial effect for his last new set of complaints. This creature is a sheer hypochondriac, and wakes up every morning with a fresh series of diseases. "My dear Madam," he says to me on Monday, "I suffer agonies from sciatica." On Tuesday, he has congestion of the liver; on Wednesday it is his pancreas which is affected—I don't believe he has one; on Thursday it is the General's thorax that is out of order. "Pshaw, my dear General," I say—or something equivalent

to it; for, as clever Mr. Eothen (what a curious name for a gentleman of property and connections to have) remarked about "Alas!" I doubt if anybody ever really said "Pshaw!" out of a comedy or a novel. We say, in real life, "Stuff!" and "Rubbish!" instead. "My dear General," then I observe, "it isn't sciatica; it isn't liver, it isn't pancreas, it isn't thorax. It's Time. It's Years. It's Age, General Gargall; and some of these days you'll die for want of breath." It makes me cross, lying here, to hear the old man croaking and grumbling; to see him swathing and bandaging, and coddling up that troublesome old body, which will not give him nor anybody else trouble much longer.

Ah! Louisa, Louisa! how impatient and querulous we can be of the sufferings of others, when we ourselves are suffering. "What's your cold to my cold?" I heard a little girl say once to another. "Am I, too, on a bed of roses?" cried the tortured Montezuma, when his Minister screamed out in agony from the heap of burning coals on which the Spaniards had laid him. Community in affliction, I am sorry to believe, makes us mutually intolerant and uncharitable. 'Tis when one is hale and hearty, and happy, that sympathy wells out for those who are in low estate and evil ease. Damiens on the wheel has no compassion to spare for his predecessor Ravaillac. Sir Charles has told me that in the hospitals he has heard patients crying out to the nurse to "stop that fellow's groaning in the next bed; he's only shamming;" and I am afraid that crows are not the only two-legged beings who, when they find a comrade sick and ailing, fall upon him and peck him to death. I'm sure Gargall don't pity me. I've caught him making faces at me behind my sofa, as Shanko Fanko my page well knows; and I am perfectly certain that I don't pity him in the slightest degree. Let him make his will, and do justice to his

relations and *friends*, or send and marry Frederica de Fytchett, and leave her a rich widow. Were I tall and comely, and happy, you would find me full of sympathy for my suffering brothers and sisters; but I am alone and miserable, and cynical (when I am cross, as I am now), and have no sympathy, save for myself, and very little even of that. 'Tis a pretty story, my dear, of Sir Philip Sidney, wounded at the battle of Zutphen, and bidding them pass the water-flask, ere he drank himself, to the dying soldier near him, saying, "Thy necessity is greater than mine;" but I am afraid that it is only a tale out of the story-books after all. Sir Charles used to say that people didn't do such things on battle-fields, but fought and struggled for the water, rather. Don't tell me about mutual sympathy in suffering. Why, wounded soldiers will drag their lengths along the ground, and strip the bodies of their slain comrades, wrenching off stars and crosses with stiffening fingers, and gnawing off epaulettes with their teeth. Sympathy! Why, I have heard that when the French frigate Medusa was wrecked, and after the raft had put off from her—(you will one day see M. Géricault's ghastly picture in the Louvre, called "*Le Radeau de la Méduse*"—a real Gorgon picture it is)—there were two men left on board the water-logged barque; two famishing, hopeless wretches, expecting death every minute; and these two men must needs quarrel and hate each other. They lived in different parts of the wreck, and whenever they met it was to curse, and run at one another with drawn knives. To be sure they were Frenchmen, which is saying a great deal; but—there's sympathy and loving-kindness for you!

My twinge is over. You shall have no more gall and wormwood in this letter, but as much milk and honey as ever you can desire. The elephants feel their confinement.

sometimes, dear; and then they go frantic, tear down their palisades, and trample on their keepers; but half an hour afterwards they are as tranquil and docile as lambs, and the boy mahout may bestride their necks, and drive them whither he lists, with his puny goad. So it is with your mamma!

I was talking of Amelia-Charlotte and her influenza. Don't let her take any more of the Ermolina Sympathetica, if you can help it; but bid her pin her faith to the good, old-fashioned water-gruel. There is nothing like it; and with plenty of hot water, with some of the best flour of Durham mustard in it, or perhaps a little bran, I think water-gruel would cure a broken leg. I don't doubt but that she has a very acute attack of influenza, but I do know that people call colds in the head by very strange and high-sounding names now-a-days. In my day gruel, footbaths, sweet spirits of nitre, a mustard plaster perhaps—(use brown paper, my dear, in preference to linen rag; it draws much better, and the more inflammation you have outside, the less danger there is of inflammation inside the chest)—were considered infallible specifics for the worst cold in the head that could possibly happen. We were content to give Master Tommy an extra pocket-handkerchief when he had a cold; now the dear child has influenza, and we call in Dr. Rheum, and cram the poor little innocent with physic. Of course, Amelia-Charlotte knows best, but I don't think that woman *could* have influenza. It isn't in her! Pay her every attention, my darling, consistent with the due care of your own precious health. She has Frederica with her, and the best of nurses and attendants. Be you another daughter to her; but pray ask Dr. Rheum what he thinks of the epidemic nature of influenza; and don't go near Amelia-Charlotte's room if there be any danger of catching a cold in *your* dear little head. It must be very annoying for poor Mr. de Fytchett,

coming home tired and exhausted from the Royal Rabbit Warrens' Office, to find sickness in his house—and of such a trifling character, too. But Amelia-Charlotte was always an aggravating thing.

The illness of your kind protectress has imposed on you, I see, a new round of duties; and, although I regret the cause, I can but rejoice at the effect of her temporary confinement to her chamber. You say that you have been shopping with Frederica every day this week—not mere millinery and gloves, and nicknack shopping, but real substantial visits to the commercial establishments at which your friends deal. For though Amelia-Charlotte keeps a cook and housekeeper at handsome wages, she is sensible enough to retain a considerable portion of the purveying department in her own hands. This is as it should be; and when you are married, Louisa, I trust that you will not only know the price of every article consumed in your house, but will have ordered a fair proportion of your stores in your own person and voice. I don't expect a lady to haunt the oil-man, the cheesemonger, and the butcher's shop; to command so many quartern loaves, or so many pounds of butter, or so much pickled pork; but it behoves her from time to time to visit her tradespeople herself, even if she does it in her carriage-and-pair, and see how things are getting on, not only as regards the quality of the goods, but the prices she is paying for them. I don't want her to chaffer and higgle with shopkeepers, but it is her duty to see that she isn't cheated; that her husband and children are not cheated; and that her tradesmen and servants don't cheat her. Injustice to all is the result of indifference. Nine-tenths of the dishonest servants are made by careless mistresses. As for tradesmen, there are a few, proud of long commercial descent and of well-earned aristocratic patronage, who

would disdain to cheat; but, as regards the great bulk of the retail trading class, I must, till they leave off their scandalous tricks of adulterating the wares they sell, decline believing in their honesty at all; and I should advise all those over whom I have influence to watch them as narrowly as they would a thievish ostler who had already been convicted of greasing the horses' teeth to prevent them eating their oats. If Mr. A. puts "lie-tea" into my best mixed, and chicory into my coffee; if he sells me sprats pounded up with Venetian red for anchovy sauce, and turmeric for mustard, I don't see any moral impediment to his falsifying his accounts, or cheating me in any other *safe* manner. Mind, I don't think he would pick my pocket, or sneak down the area and purloin my silver spoons. He is too cowardly for that, and is afraid of penal servitude and the hulks; but he will stop at no roguery on this side Portland Island. *Qui a bu, boira;* and an adulterating tradesman must be able to digest anything short of felony.

Thus, although you are a young lady of birth and education—although you have a brougham to ride in, and may one day have a handsome establishment of your own—ay, and a coronet, Miss, upon the panels of your carriage—I would wish you to understand that there is nothing derogatory or undignified in shopping. I don't expect to see Miss Chesterfield sweeping into the greengrocer's shed, or cheapening cauliflowers, or inquiring after the price of kidneys at the butcher's; but there is a great deal of quiet, genteel, interesting shopping which you might do, and ought to do, and which, once done, will leave you plenty of time for Swan and Edgar's, and Hunt and Roskell's, and the shawl, and bonnet, and point lace, and *articles de Paris* shops of Regent Street. You may buy biscuits and fancy

bread; you may buy flowers and fruit; you may select a ripe Stilton at the cheesemonger's for Mr. de Fytchett to enjoy with the port wine, to the consumption of which you observe that he is not averse; you may even peep in the fishmonger's and interest yourself a little about a salmon, or a turbot, or some red mullet. This isn't going to market; it's going on 'Change in housekeeping: and it's a much better employment for a sensible young woman, let me tell you, than trotting off to confession at the proprietary chapel of St. Pytchley-le-Grills. There was a sad to-do about the Pope and the Puseyites in 1849, when I was last in London and the world; and it was painful for me to see fresh, comely young lasses gliding to those gimcrack Puseyite chapels early in the morning of week-days, with big velvet and gold-clasped Services in their hands. Ah, girls, how much better off you would have been had you been going to market!

Do you suppose Mr. de Fytchett hasn't *his* shopping to do, and that he doesn't do it himself, like a man? He doesn't trust his confidential man and butler to buy his wines for him, I warrant, but drives down to Crutched Friars and tastes, himself, the best Lafittes and Pommards in Mr. Mogford's stock, or is seen flitting about auction-rooms with a catalogue in one hand and a pencil in the other, when the "choice stock of a gentleman going abroad," or of a "well-known *bon vivant* deceased," is to be disposed of. If ever there existed a man who was particular about his cellar, it was your poor dear papa. He was no champagne drinker; he always associated that fizzing, unsatisfactory, ruinously-expensive wine with Jacobinism, and Buonaparte, and foreign immorality; but of good sound clarets, Burgundies, ports, and Madeiras—sherries he could not endure—he was an unrivalled connoisseur, and a staunch consumer. I don't

believe there is any Madeira in the market now. No; I have some of the last of the old, old stock—the brave, generous, fragrant, *gentleman's* wine. People tell me they can buy Madeira. I doubt it. A few decayed Sybarites, like myself, may possess a dozen or two of that good drink; but the wine itself, as a marketable article, has gone out like Hessian boots, like yellow curricles, like beaver bonnets, like dozens of the pleasant things of the days that are to return no more. They used to send Madeira to the East Indies and back again; the shaking of the sea voyage did the wine good. Now I hear they mix Cape, sherry, brandy, and leather shavings in a cask, and rack the wretched mixture backwards and forwards by machinery.

Heigho! Sir Charles had some of Lucien Buonaparte's Clos-Vougeot, taken out of the ship in which Lucien was captured by the English during the Great War. That was a war! Do you call that miserable, shuffling Crimean squabble, which left so many widows and orphans, and brought so few triumphs to our arms, a war? I don't. Your papa had some of the Duke of Queensberry's Tokay, my dear—real Hungarian Tokay, at thirty-five guineas a dozen, purchased at his Grace's sale in 1810. His Grace belonged to the very highest aristocracy; but he was a little too much like Mr. Thackeray's Marquis of Steyne in "Vanity Fair" to have suited the present generation. The Radicals used to call him Old Q. He was the last nobleman of the old *régime* who went to bed every night with a quarter of a pound of raw rump-steak secured to either side of his nightcap, next his cheek, to preserve the beautiful bloom of his complexion. In the daytime he used to sit in the verandah of his great mansion in Piccadilly, with an umbrella before him to shade his cheeks from the sun; his windows were always open to the street, as those of a great British nobleman should be; and at night, when the

gorgeous saloons were all lighted up, the wicked young bucks who flourished—yes, that is the word, for they did flourish—at the commencement of this century, used to bribe the hackney-coachmen on the Piccadilly "stand" opposite, and clambering on the roofs of the vehicles, watch the great Duke of Queensberry exhilirating himself with Tokay, and gambling and shrieking in his golden palace with his noble companions and the creatures in satin and diamonds, whom I disdain to name.

At least this age is more decorous in its wickedness, and Alcibiades and his brother prodigals sneak away to Brompton and St. John's Wood, or to little entresols on a Paris Boulevard. I am afraid we are not more moral; but we have some sense of shame now-a-days. Medmenham Abbey would be indicted. Lord Barrymore would be at the hulks. The Pantheon, with Mrs. Cornely's masquerades, would be put down by the police. And this better tone is due simply, I think, to our having a good, virtuous Queen on the throne, who came among us a fresh, innocent girl, and has grown up to be the best wife and mother in Christendom. One can't get on without a Queen to keep order in the Court, however well we may dispense with a King. Why, we hadn't had a really nice Queen—previous to the accession of our beloved Victoria—since the time of Queen Anne. George the First left his queen abroad, desolate, immured, disgraced, pining in her gloomy prison, Konigsmarke's blood staining her wedding-ring. George the Second's queen was an imperious, scheming politician, who loved high play and late hours, and connived at her husband's ugly favourites for "purposes of State." George the Third's queen, Charlotte, was morose, avaricious, and stupid when young, and a mere snuffy, maid-scolding virago when old. True, there was the good Queen Adelaide, a meek charitable woman, who never

said one word louder than another, or interfered in anything, although my Lord Brougham did once accuse her, on the occasion of a change of Ministry, of having "done it all." But the good Queen Adelaide's co-tenure of the sceptre was of too brief duration, and the times in which she lived were too stormy with Radicalism, and Reform, and Repeal, and Rick-burning, and the like, to produce any appreciably beneficial effect on the Court over which she presided. And remember, that there were among Queen Adelaide's courtiers some of the most scandalous nobles of a scandalous epoch, and that the traditions of Carlton House and the Brighton Pavilion were yet fresh in men's minds. You see that I have omitted one queen in my list—that wretched Caroline of Brunswick, who never was a queen; and for whom it would have been so much better had she never been born. In the time with which I have had to do we mentioned her too often; and even now she will start up ever and anon, ghost-like, in my reminiscences. But for that it would be preferable not to breathe her name at all.

My darling did not bargain, perhaps, for a course of English history combined with her mamma's advice concerning domestic affairs and rules for the "Whole Duty" of a young lady; but you must pardon me my digressions and overlook my garrulity. Indeed, from what I hear and read, digression would seem to be a fashion of the age, and for once I am not behind it. Even my Lord Macaulay, in his inimitable history, seems to stray far oftener out of the beaten track than grave Messrs. Hume or Gibbon would have deemed it dignified to do. They only stopped for a moment, now and then, to sneer at something pure and holy, whereas my Lord Macaulay only digresses to tell us about some picturesque and interesting human things. There is Mr. Carlyle too (whom you are to admire very much indeed

as a great philosopher, but not by any means to read till there is a Family Carlyle published, for I understand that he treats of many things which are not proper for a young lady to know); Mr. Lampkin tells me that he digresses in the most wonderful manner about all sorts of things. And while I am upon the topic of eminent literary men, did you not tell me in your last letter that you had been to hear Mr. Albert Smith's "China," at the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly—(he is a clever, good-natured man, my dear, and had written "Ledbury," and "Tadpole," and "Scattergood," and the "Gent," and innumerable amusing plays, novels, and papers, before I left the world, and his industry must have been prodigious; but I wish he had not grown a beard; he had a fine head of hair in '49, and his whiskers were genteel) —did you not tell me that, mixed up with his quaint Chinese curiosities (gongs and dried ducks, concentric balls, ivory chessmen, edible bird's-nests and things) and Mr. Beverley's beautiful pictures, Mr. Albert Smith told you all sorts of funny stories about people eating penny buns and making speeches at wedding breakfasts, and crinoline, and engineers with incomprehensible grievances? Wasn't that digression? And very entertaining digression you may say, too.

Thus, while the gentlemen do their shopping: choosing their wines—(the liqueurs they ought to leave to the ladies, as having proverbially sweet teeth)—picking out the very best brands of cigars, besides laying in such stocks of men's matters as are included in shaving materials, dispatch boxes, men's books—those heavy thick squat volumes full of matter that only men can understand, that look so well on the library shelves, with their shining backs gilt-lettered, under the vandyked morocco valance—but are so painfully uninteresting to our sex, when *aux abois* for literature, we

take them out on a wet day:—leaving them this description of purchases, to us remain a whole host of shops, and a whole catalogue of shopping to do. I have already touched on the extent to which a lady may reasonably interfere in the mere eating and drinking necessaries of life. Lazy housekeepers leave the commissariat entirely in the hands of their domestics, or to the alternately obsequious and impertinent people who haunt genteel streets in the forenoon, calling "for orders" in light carts and vans; and at Christmas time, when those fatal bills come in, they discover the mistake they have committed. Again, stingy housekeepers are equally to be regarded as examples to be shunned. Don't be always poking and prying into the mysteries of the still-room and the store-cupboard—you make your servants hate you, and do yourself no good; although there are many ladies of rank who adopt this nip-cheese, candle-end saving, pebble-peeling, flea-skinning principle. Believe me, there is little of romance in the story of the immensely rich nobleman who, when his family were out of town, put his servants on board wages, and went himself into Bond Street to purchase a fowl for his dinner; and after ordering the smallest, cheapest chicken the shopman could find him, retraced his steps, and said, that as he was such a very small eater, *he thought that half the fowl would be enough for him;* which moiety of a pullet was accordingly sent to Sardanapalus House, and debited to his lordship's account. Know what you have, and what you have to pay for it; but don't ask where the last of the pound of rushlights has gone to, or—as I have known *une grande dame de par le monde* do—lock up the cold potatoes in a buhl cabinet. The usages of London society may have changed since my time, dear, and housekeeping may be managed very differently from the manner I knew it to be in 1849; but I know that meanness, and

avarice, and penny-wisdom and pound-foolishness are as pre valent now as ever, and that the Harpagons, the Hopkinses, the Elweses, and the Cutlers of society never die.

For your miscellaneous and amusing shopping you have that dear, delightful Hanway Yard, leading from Oxford Street to Tottenham Court Road, with its old point lace, its gold beads, its Dresden china, coral ornaments, filagree brooches, Venetian mirrors, Bohemian glass, ivory boxes, agate bracelets, tortoiseshell housewives, and quaint *bric-à-brac* of almost every imaginable description. The Pantheon is a nice place, too, for such women's ware—things worth a great deal to buy and nothing to sell; and the Soho Bazaar offers many attractions of a similar nature. There is the German Fair, too, if you want to purchase toys and toilet ornaments, and a very curious warehouse, full of *articles de Paris*, or rather *d'Allemagne*, at Kossmann, brothers, in Wellington Street, Strand; but I prefer Hanway Yard. My dear, the shops are kept by Jews, and with Jews those close bargains which women delight in so are always to be made. Christian *bric-à-brac* dealers are honest enough, but gruff, opinionated, and occasionally uncivil; whereas the Hebrews are always obliging, bland, and courteous. I believe they take as keen a pleasure in bargaining as do their customers; and besides, as a rule, the Jews don't refuse money. Beat them down as much as ever you like, but leave them the most infinitesimal margin of profit, and they will close with your offer. 'Tis by the accumulation of those farthing profits that they gather millions, and from their dusky counting-houses foment or crush revolutions, and rule the proudest empires in the world.

Never enter the Lowther Arcade, save at Christmas time, and then only to see the pretty spectacle of the children buying toys. At other seasons of the year the Lowther

Arcade is confusion. Nothing is sold but rubbish—the sweepings of the cheap hucksters' stalls of the Palais Royal; and the place is besieged, besides, by grinning whippersnappers and indifferent characters of all descriptions. As the Lowther Arcade is vulgar and impertinent, so is its more aristocratic Burlington Arcade dangerous and dissolute; you must go there sometimes, for they sell some of the very prettiest things in the world in its darksome shops, but I conjure you never to enter its precincts after noon has struck. Bless you.

CONSTANCE CHESTERFIELD.

LETTER THE SIXTH.

ON GIVING, EATING, AND COOKING DINNERS, AND ON THE CONNECTION BETWEEN COOKERY AND LOVE.

Pumpwell-le-Springs.

I HAVE been ill, my sweetest—that is, worse than usual. To be a regular correspondent is a hard task for a hopeless valetudinarian; and I do not wonder at your respectful insinuation, that my last two letters have been dull and prosy. The vile fog, my dear, which has penetrated even to the usually clear-skied Pumpwell, has distressed your mamma's thorax; and I can pity, now, the influenza of Amelia-Charlotte, as I have been subject to its vindictiveness myself. This confession militates a little against that which I said concerning sympathy in my last; but you will never forget, I trust, that I am a Woman, and that I have a right to change my mind at least once a day. If women were all stable, and never varied in their opinions, there would be an end, I take it, to fashion, to flirtation, to polite conversation, and to polite society generally. Imagine what a tiresome, distressing world it would be, if two and two always made four, and the sum of the parts were equal to the whole. There was a Count Algarotti, once, who tried to make ladies as scientific as M. de Voltaire made Madame du Châtelet. He wrote a little book called "*Il Newtonismo per le dame:*" only think! the Principia for ladies! and it was all very lucid and rational, I dare say; but to my mind, he should

have commenced his mathematical system with the assumption—that so far as women are concerned, a point has both length and breadth; that parallel lines *will* meet; and that the centre is not equi-distant from the circumference.

And so you have seen him at last. He has appeared in all his youth, beauty, glory, moustaches, pegtops, and watch-charms! And he turns out not to be a Lord after all. Reginald Tapeleigh is only high up in the Foreign Office. He is not a clerk, you say. Far from it: he is a government *attaché*. He has been private secretary to Lord Mousetrapmere, and some of these days may be a secretary of legation, minister, ambassador; who knows? The brougham which he entered, when he left Babylon Bridge Railway Terminus, was not his. It belonged, you informed me, to his most intimate friend, Viscount Plumeleigh, who is at present shooting on his moor in Scotland; but Reginald rides his horse during the season, and, besides, can always have the use of his aunt the Countess of Millamant's carriage. He lives in charming chambers in the Albany. He has a handsome private fortune of his own—so Amelia-Charlotte has found out from some lawyer people in Lincoln's Inn:—the dear, clever, inquisitive creature! He sings delightfully, and can cut out profiles in black paper. If he has money, why does he continue to scribble in that stupid Foreign Office? Why doesn't he go into Parliament, or buy a yacht, or go buffalo-hunting in the far West, or do something bold and dashing? I will be bound that his "handsome private fortune," if inquired into, would dwindle down to twopence—which, in society, means a couple of hundred a year or so; and even with that pittance he might, if he chose, do something grand, and be something. I knew a young man, years ago, one Richard Roughton, whom the gentlemen called "Wild Dick." With all his wildness he was a gentleman; and for

a sweet courteous manner he had among women and children, he was adored by our sex. He had one of those souls which, to the end, never lose all their innate innocence, and retain a liking for bohea, raspberry jam, and blind-mans-buff. Away from us I am afraid Dick Roughton—one of the Roughtons of Buffshire, my dear, an excellent county family—diced and drank, and was as the wickedest of the wicked. He had spent nearly all his patrimony, till there remained only the twopence which I, perhaps uncharitably, conjecture to be the inheritance of Reginald Tapeleigh. He was in love with a great heiress, who would have had anything to say to him, even to saying yes, if he had proposed to run away with her; but her friends nothing at all. If Dick had shot Mr. Perceval, or been seen walking arm-in-arm with Mr. Cobbett, the gridiron man, he could not have been regarded with a more evil eye. He was not embarrassed. He had squandered more ready money than he had incurred debts; but there were the dreadful facts, that he was desperately wild, and that he was becoming poor. Society doesn't forgive such a combination. Now, what do you think "Wild Dick" Roughton—I can't help calling him by his reckless man's name—did? He capitalised his twopence into a sum of some two or three thousand pounds. He and the great heiress (who was but a minor yet, else she would have given him all) broke, it was known afterwards, a common silver sixpence between them, and wore each a half by a ribbon round their necks. Wasn't it like Lucy Asheton and Edgar of Ravenswood? The end was happier. Dick Roughton gave one of the wildest suppers that had ever been known to all the young men of his wild set at the Old Slaughter's Coffee House. He went away, and was gone exactly six years. Nobody ever heard of him, save his few creditors, who were paid their claims through his lawyer, in regular

and handsome instalments; and, you may be sure, the heiress, although the letters *she* received must have been directed to the post-office or the pastrycook's, for none ever came to her papa and mamma's grand mansion. When Richard Roughton came back, he was *riche à millions*—positively overflowing with money, my dear. He was very gaunt and sunburnt, and honestly confessed that he had been to South America, gone into trade, and gained every penny of his fortune by sagacious operations in bullocks' horns and hides, cochineal, and quicksilver, and that he had left a flourishing firm under the title of Roughton, Robins, and Co., and in which he was still a sleeping partner, in Valparaiso. Malicious people hinted that the horns and hides were mere pretences, and that "Wild Dick" had made his money either by piracy in the Spanish main or by gambling in foreign funds; and some even went so far as to say that he must have murdered a Don; but there was the money. The two halves of the sixpence were joined, never to be put asunder. He married the heiress; was in Parliament within six months from his return; was made a baronet just before the Reform Bill passed; retired to Buffshire with his wife when that unhappy measure became law, and only last year I saw Sir Richard Roughton's name down in the list of High Sheriffs.

The embryo acquaintance you had formed with Reginald Tapeleigh seems to have made some steps towards maturity after you had been properly introduced to him. He belongs to the Hare and Hounds Club in St. James's Square. Mr. de Fytchett is likewise a member of that flourishing and genteel *réunion*. It is as natural for men to ask each other home—when they have homes—to dinner, as for women to ask each other how much they gave—when they give anything—for their bonnets. So, Mr. de Fytchett having dined with Reginald at the Club, and at the grand banquet

given to the Right Honourable James Goosequill on his proceeding to India as a member of council, and elsewhere—although you do not tell me where else—bethought himself that he might as well ask Reginald home to dinner in Pagoda Square. I am glad to hear that the entertainment went off so successfully, and was of the very genteelest description. Persons occupying even a more exalted station in life than our friends in Pagoda Square are not ashamed to have their *dîners de parade* sent in from the pastrycook's; to eat—they don't know what, cooked by—they don't know whom; but I rejoice to learn that the De Fytchetts repudiate such hypocrisies, and that the preparation of the dinner was on this, as on previous occasions, confided to Mrs. Pattypan, the regular professed cook of Amelia-Charlotte's well-regulated establishment. It gave the highest satisfaction to all parties concerned; and I will venture to say that the satisfaction in question was felt in the highest degree by Mrs. Pattypan herself. For, surely, next to the rapture a great Captain must feel at having gained a great victory, there must come the joy experienced by a cook who knows her calling, and is proud of it, at having served up a good dinner without the slightest hitch or mishap.

Not unadvisedly do I say, the cook's "calling." Of late years a ridiculous whim has sprung up of dignifying cookery with the appellation of an Art. The man-cook, forsooth, of modern times, is an "Artist;" plays the piano; has his portrait engraved; has his *menus* executed in ornamental caligraphy on pink paper, with an embossed or laced border; scribbles poetry in a "studio" which should, properly, be a scullery; and, perhaps, finishes by publishing his Life and Times, in three volumes, octavo. He writes, too, a literary cookery-book, with some spurious Greek or Latin title; and mingles culinary recipes with nonsensical rhapsodies and

flights of fine writing. As a rule, the literary portion is the work of some hack who cribs his antiquarianism and criticism out of Brillat Savarin, or the *Almanach des Gourmands;* while the practical portion is mainly translated from the *Cuisinier Royal*, or even less scrupulously annexed from our old English friends Mrs. Rundell or Miss Acton. As a rule, Louisa, these literary cookery-books, for culinary purposes, are useless. You can't work by them. The ingredients they prescribe are intolerably expensive; and throughout there is a lamentable deficiency in the strong, homely, nervous directions of the practical cook; such as, "skim off the fat;" or, "stir well and serve hot;" or, "chop up the liver with a handful of sweet herbs." As to M. Brillat Savarin, whose *Physiologie du Goût* is the text-book of the fine kitchen-stuff writers, many of his notions on cookery are fantastic, and many more repulsively coarse. A pretty gastronomic taste must the man have possessed whose formula for eating a "fat little bird" is to take him up with your fingers, cram him into your mouth, and craunch him, bones and all! Faugh! The *Almanach des Gourmands*—Almanac of Gluttons!—was written by clever cynical men, flippant and unbelieving, as Frenchmen generally are; and who, many of them, had to write *for* their dinners, rather than *of* the dinners they pretended to have eaten. Then came M. Charles Louis Eustache Ude, a whimsical, good-natured, exorbitantly vain man, who—his head full of the kings, ambassadors, and plenipotentiaries, for whom he had cooked, and who petted him, and laughed at his droll sayings—imagined that he and his stewpans had had quite as much to do with the Treaty of Paris and the Congress of Vienna as Castlereagh, Metternich, Talleyrand, or Pozzo di Borgo. The cook henceforth was to be no more an honest hard-working upper servant in a white jacket and nightcap, mixing

his sauces here, and giving an eye to his stewpans there, but an "artist," on whom it would be expedient, at the first convenient opportunity, to bestow the ribbon of the Legion of Honour—although far worse men than cooks have enjoyed that decoration ere now, my dear—and who, away from his kitchen, was to belong to a club of *cognoscenti*, deliver opinions on the paintings in the Royal Academy Exhibition, drive a cabriolet with a tiger, and deliver lectures at literary and scientific institutions. These absurdities culminated in the person of the late M. Soyer, whom several of my military friends remember to have seen in the Crimea; who, according to what I have heard of him, was one of the best-natured, honestest, most generous souls that ever existed, with just enough of the Gascon in his composition to make his vanity and braggadocio amusing; who had a real faculty for invention and organisation; who would have made an excellent commissary, hotel-keeper, comedian, or dancing-master; who was the prince of good fellows, the merriest of diners-out, the staunchest and tenderest of friends; who might have been, and was, anything but a COOK. It wasn't in him. He couldn't "skim off the fat," "chop the liver," or "serve hot." He called his dishes by fine names. They cost a great deal of money, and didn't taste well when eaten. Thus, in your considerations of cookery, pray dismiss the idea of talking about its being an Art. It is a very useful, honest, pleasant calling, and nothing else. Of course it requires tuition and experience, but innate vocation and inherent aptitude have much to do with excellence in its pursuit. I do believe, in its largest sense, with the French axiom, that one may become (by practice) a cook, but that one is born a "roaster." Not only in roasting, but in many other departments of cookery, we see people who are, to the manner, born, and who have not acquired, but have been naturally endowed

with, a skill and dexterity quite independent of education. Some are born to boil potatoes well, and some to fry them; some have a special gift for mixing a salad; and some for making pie-crust. There are those who couldn't make an omelette if they had passed half their lives in a culinary college; others who, I believe, were they babies in arms, could toss a pancake, brew whiskey punch, stew oysters, concoct despatch-lobster, and make the very best walnut pickles that ever were eaten with mutton chops. This is genius, my dear. All the universities, colleges, seminaries, social science congresses in the world, can't illumine that immortal lamp. Not only in cookery, but in a hundred different phases of human life, you see the light shining pure and serene through the thickest veil of ignorance and neglect. Rhyming dictionaries and repertories of *bon mots* won't give your choicest *beau parleur*, your most brilliant diner-out, the untutored wit, the unadorned epigrams that flow spontaneous from the mouth of an Irish hod-carrier, or an omnibus-conductor at the White Horse Cellars. The form is as rough as a rock; but the vein of precious metal runs through, sparkling and priceless.

> "The merest fool, the dullest clod,
> Can turn a verse by labour wrought;
> 'Tis only he inspired by God
> Can plant, within the verse, a Thought."

Which accounts, my dear, for the infinity of "Minor Minstrels," whom the *Athenæum* notices every year, and the prosperous trade driven by the trunkmakers and cheesemongers. Poetry will be taught in "six lessons" one day, I presume, like elegant penmanship and park-riding. Meanwhile, I will believe in genius and the fortunate ones who have the gift of doing so well the things which they have

never been taught. Some can cook, and some drive a tandem by inspiration. Some children's fingers fall naturally on the keys of a pianoforte, and form chords untutored. Others will begin to dance as gracefully as Madame Louise Michau, Madame Adelaïde, or Madame Bizet Michau, those three graces of the mazy dance, before they have left off toddling. But hark, in your ear, my Louisa. In cookery, and in everything else, a special gift, a genius, for one section of knowledge, by no means exempts us from the duty and necessity of applying ourselves strenuously to the study of the other sections. It isn't because you may have a gift for reading with eloquence and emphasis, that you are not to learn writing. We can't keep one cook to boil potatoes, another to roast partridges, and another to make bread sauce. Watchmaking is the only branch of human knowledge in which such a division of skill and labour is permissible or practicable. We should always strive to know our business thoroughly. A man has no right to dub himself a scholar because he can talk Latin; many Hungarian refugees and poor Catholic curates can do that. Or because he can talk Greek; there are many clerks to merchants of Old Broad Street and Finsbury Circus who could put *The Times* newspaper, supplement and all, into Greek—not spurious Romaic, but in the tongue once talked by Plato and Sòcrates. An Oxford Don—with not, perhaps, one hundredth part of their *real* knowledge of a dead language—receives, perhaps, his fifteen hundred per annum; —they are contented with some thirty shillings a week. Or because he knows Hebrew. Out of the Judengasse at Frankfort, or Bevis Marks in London, you might pick dozens of oleaginous Rabbins who speak Hebrew fluently, and know it thoroughly. Only if a man be deeply learned in mathematics has he a right to call himself a scholar, and an erudite one; for I have heard men say that the

mathematics comprise all human knowledge, and that proficiency in these mysteries trenches on the Divine—at an immense and impassable distance; but the great mathematician is still at the very frontier of the unspeakable land, at the very brink of the gulf that divides the utmost thing that man can know from the infinite things which he can never know on this side the gulf. And the gulf is called Eternity.

I don't want to be a Countess Algarotti, or to worry you with a course of "*Newtonismo per le dame*," so I will come back at once to Cookery. It is true that Mrs. Somerville and Miss Martineau have done much in late years to make science and philosophy fashionable among ladies; but you know my opinions concerning two and two making four with our sex. I once knew a girl of eighteen who professed to have read Hobbes's "Leviathan" through. I don't believe that she had; but I dare say she might have looked into the immense dreary folio. I'd have Hobbes'd her, if I had been her mamma, the pert thing. I always predicted that she—her name was Kittlum—would come to no good. And she didn't. At twenty-two she ran away with a red-headed usher from a young gentleman's boarding-school at Turnham Green, and the last I heard of her was, that he was delivering lectures on Electro Biology in the north of England; that he drank fearfully, and beat her shamefully; and that she had sunk to the unspeakable degradation of being a Medium.

With considerable curiosity, mingled with amusement, I have perused your account of Mr. de Fytchett's state banquet. So it was a *dîner à la Russe*, was it? The Pagodians have become inoculated with the idea promulgated some months since in the columns of the *Times*, by a mysterious epicurean, concealing himself beneath three initials, and

dating from the ineffable regions of Berkeley Square. I spoke of the dinner to several of my acquaintances here before I showed them your letter, and received all sorts of explanations and conjectures concerning a Russian dinner. Lampkin, in his meek way, surmised that it consisted mainly of caviare, and quoted some lines from Shakspeare, either about the "Rugged Russian bear," or something being "caviar to the general"—I don't remember which. Old General Gargall rudely expressed it as his opinion that you had nothing to eat but tallow candles and train oil; and told horrible, and I hope mendacious stories, about the way the Cossacks emptied the street-lamps and plundered the tallow-chandlers' shops during the foreign occupation of Paris, in 1815. Several old ladies maintained that at Russian dinners the gentlemen all got tipsy with "quass," and knouted their wives all round when the dessert came. Another party stated the bill of fare to consist of bears' hams, bear's-cub steaks, stewed bears' feet, bear's-tail soup, dried reindeers' tongues, potted wolf, fir-cones and oil, raw turnips sliced in brandy, with plenty of ice between the courses. Fortunately we have had, on a visit to the head-master of the Grammar School here, a very well-informed, gentlemanly person of a certain age, a Mr. Nedwards. He has a long, tawny moustache, which he twists constantly, and is very fond of humming airs from the operas. He has endeavoured to make me like Signor Verdi; he plays selections from his works very prettily on the piano; and has almost succeeded. He resided a long time in Russia, whither, I believe, he was sent on a diplomatic mission. Mr. Nedwards is very fond of the Russians, and of *dîners à la Russe.* Doctor Gradus, of the Grammar School, says that he is one of the most estimable of persons, and that he has every chance of being made a Commissioner some day. His political views are strictly

conservative; and I believe he writes articles for nothing in the *Saturday Review*. But he is not a professional literary man: O dear, no!—and, in fact, my Louisa, if you were not already——but I digress. The only fault I have to find with Mr. Nedwards, who is otherwise *charmant*, is that he has a habit of coming very late when he is asked to dinner.

According to Mr. N., a *dîner à la Russe* is the *acmé* and perfection of the European *cuisine*. There is, perhaps, just a sufficient suspicion of orientalism about it to give it a picturesque character; otherwise, it is a scientific combination of all the best characteristics of French and Russian cookery. The first, you know, my darling, from experience and from report. The second comprises those elaborate, ingenious, and highly civilised dishes, called *Stchi*—you should only try to pronounce the word when you are labouring under a severe attack of influenza—which *Stchi* is a reeking cabbage soup with the yolks of eggs and square blocks of fresh boiled beef floating in it. Then there is *Batwinia*, a soup made of fish, ice, oil, and half-fermented beer, or *qvas*. There are *pirogues*, too, or hot meat pies, which you eat with your fingers. There are certain exquisite Russian fish, such as *sterlet* and *sassina*, which can't be obtained in England—not even through the instrumentality of Morell, or Fortnum and Mason; and when all these good things of the old Muscovite kitchen are mingled with the elegancies of Verrey's, and the Trois Frères Provençaux, as is invariably the case at the genteel tables of St. Petersburg and Moscow; when, added to your cabbage soup, and fish, and ice, you have the *salmis* and *soufflés* of dear Paris; the *compotes*, and *suprêmes*, and *mayonnaises*, moistened by the exquisite wines of Bordeaux and Burgundy, and the best Cliquot or Ruinart's champagne; when you are served in comfort, cleanliness, and eloquence, by silent and attentive

servants, and are saved the trouble of carving or helping your neighbours, you have the broad idea of a *dîner à la Russe.*

Mr. Nedwards says that you never find locks of red hair in your soup, or fleas baked in your bread, in Russia. The people who report these things are wicked and libellous calumniators. I can't say that his graphic and genteel description of a Russian dinner tallies with any great exactitude with your *tableau* of Mr. de Fytchett's *dîner à la Russe.* I miss the *buffet* set out with condiments and *hors d'œuvres,* such as dried tongue, codfish, sardines, pickled and kippered salmon, gherkins and cranberries *en marinade,* or conserved, with flasks of Cognac or liqueurs, of which the guests partake as a species of whet or relish, or spur to their appetites before dinner, and which, in some houses, are handed round between the *potage* and the first course. The chief peculiarities at your Russian dinner in Pagoda Square appear to me to have been, in the fact that you didn't see anything of what you had to eat beyond the tiny portion on your plates; that the table was profusely decorated with fruits and flowers, and very little else; that no lordly joint, no stately turkey or capon, graced the board—the carving being all performed at a side table; that the wines were whisked round, and poked underneath your ears instead of sociably circulating—champagne, to my mind, is the only wine that ought to be handed round, because so few gentlemen know how to pour it out properly; and that, during the whole time of dinner, a cloud of servants hung and buzzed round the table like gadflies, perching on your plate, and tinkling your wine-glasses together, and generally pervading and annoying you.

My dear, I am an old-fashioned woman, and think that the best dinner is one where the solid, succulent viands

of our English kitchen—viands which our climate and our habits demand—are mingled in moderation with the light, savoury, and elegant dishes of France. So, too, with wines. Some gentlemen will have, and ought to have, port. One of the best and wisest men I ever knew said to me—I am old, and can bear plain-spoken language—"Why should I be compelled to drink light Claret that is like red ink? My dear Madam, it gives me the stomach ache. I like Port Wine, and when I have it, *I like it stiff*. My grandfather drank Port Wine, and he sailed round the world with Captain Cook. My great-grandfather drank Port Wine, and he fought at the battle of Blenheim. Let me drink Port Wine, and thank God for it, as my ancestors have done before me."

Respecting the way that dinner tables are set out, I must confess that I like to see my dinner. Flowers are beautiful things in the drawing-room and in the conservatory. Fruit is capital at dessert. A silver épergne, or plateau, a group in sham alabaster, are excellent in their way, and in their place; but I prefer, at dinner, the view of a cruet-stand or a dish of nicely-browned macaroni. I think a well-cooked joint of meat a grand and noble object; and if the host can carve, it is mean and pusillanimous for him to have it hacked and hewed to pieces by menials at a sideboard. With ladies the case is different. Their little hands were never made to hold the carving knife and fork, and although some of the very best carvers in my acquaintance have belonged to our sex, I can't, on the other hand, forget a poor young relative of mine, who was governess in a noble family, and when the children dined at one o'clock was obliged to carve. It was, tacitly, considered as a part of her engagement. The poor timid little creature had scarcely strength or nerve enough to sever a lark's wing from its body. Dinner time was to her a season of unutterable tribulation and despair; and she has

told me, often, that she always used to say her prayers before she carved.

Again, a well-furnished, plentifully-covered English dinner table is an admirable incentive to joyous conversation, to genial wit and graceful hospitality. The commendation, the discussion of the good things before you, add a hundred harmless pleasures to the meal. You meet clever men at dinner, who can discourse pleasantly and learnedly about the dishes before them, and make more epigrams out of a boiled tongue than the cook can concoct from lamb cutlets. Helping and being helped will give rise to numberless little acts of courtesy and kindliness, which may culminate between young people in harmless endearment. More marriages have owed their foundation to the wing of a fowl adroitly severed, than to sentimental conversations or flirtations in the conservatory. Meantime, I suppose we must all follow Dame Fashion; so I wish you joy of your fruits and flowers and *entourage* of servants. To-day it is the ***dîner à la Russe*** that is *à la mode.* To-morrow it may be the *dîner à la Turque* or *à la Chinoise.* How would you like to have to sit cross-legged round a brass tray, to eat with your fingers, or be fed by a Pasha, who, when he wishes to pay you an especial compliment, rolls a handful of rice into a greasy ball, and pops it into your mouth? How would you like to ply your chopsticks at a dinner with some nasty Mandarins, and have bird's-nest soup, dried ducks, pickled eggs, preserved caterpillars, stewed snails, unsugared tea, and hot wines in thimblefuls for dinner? Tell me in your next, and believe me ever your affectionate

CONSTANCE CHESTERFIELD.

LETTER THE SEVENTH.

OF PUBLIC AMUSEMENTS, AND ESPECIALLY OF DRAMATIC AND OPERATIC PERFORMANCES.

YOUR last letter, my child, reads like a playbill. Surely, it should be written in alternate lines of black and red, be headed by the royal arms, and conclude with a neat epigraph of *Vivant Regina et Princeps*, with a touching allusion to "No money returned." You seem to have been gadding about from playhouse to playhouse for the last fortnight. That it is Christmas-time might be alleged as one excuse for your unusual dissipation—if any excuse were needed; but I am not about to scold Mrs. de Fytchett for taking you to the dress-circle at the Haymarket—to an *avant scène* at the Olympic—to a private box at the Princess's, and to the stalls at the Adelphi. Amelia-Charlotte knows well my sentiments are in favour of the British Drama—and of the British Opera, when there happens to be one in existence: (you must go again to Covent Garden and hear Miss Louisa Pyne)—when those entertainments are properly conducted. I don't think ladies ought to stay out the *ballet*, as it is at present given at the Italian Opera—although that may be prejudice on my part. In my time the female dancers—Mademoiselle] Noblet, and others—used to wear skirts of something like *decent* length; and I decidedly disapprove of theatrical performances whose attractions mainly consist in bold-faced young ladies, very thickly painted, assuming the

garments of the opposite sex. But as a rule and statute for your guidance, I say, "Go to the Play," when any pieces worth seeing are being performed. I am sure more harm has been done by people stopping away from playhouses than by their attending those places of amusement.

There is in England a vast body of conscientious persons who strongly object to any theatrical performances whatever. The majority of such persons are in easy, and many in affluent, circumstances. As to the working classes, they are, almost to a man, woman, and child, devoted admirers of the Drama. You might test this, I think, by opening Drury Lane and Covent Garden gratis one night:—why wasn't it done when the Princess Royal was married?—and considering the rush that would take place. But as the commercial success of theatres must ever mainly depend upon the persons who can afford to pay liberally for admission to the entertainments presented—remember that the occupant of a private box disburses as much as do thirty or forty sitters in the gallery—it is worth while briefly to inquire why so many otherwise excellent and just persons rigidly and obstinately set their faces against the footlights and the green-baize curtain.

England, to be sure, is not the only country where the Drama is held in disfavour by a party. Until very lately, in France, the priests used to refuse Christian burial to actors and actresses, exactly as they denied the rites of sepulture to the great Molière. There was a reason for this rigour. The *odium theologicum* never dies. Priests never forget, and the dramatic descendants of Molière had never been forgiven for a certain piece he wrote against the black-gowns, called *Tartuffe*. But in England the priests, with their Mysteries, and Moralities, and Miracle Plays, were the first theatrical managers. In the plays of Shakspeare the dignified clergy of the Anglican persuasion are always treated with the pro-

foundest respect; and even Romish cardinals and friars are held in some decent estimation. The Vicar of Stratford-upon-Avon in Charles's time—garrulous Mr. Ward—eagerly collected particulars—scant are they, but precious—of Shakspeare's life. No ecclesiastical veto stopped the erection of the monument to the Bard in Stratford Church and Westminster Abbey. A bishop selected the magnificent extract from Prospero's speech in the "Tempest" which graces the pedestal of Roubiliac's statue. Bishops and learned divines have annotated and edited our Shakspeare's works. In that same Abbey of Westminster Garrick was buried, nobles holding up the pall, the Dean and Chapter receiving the corpse as the procession wound up the aisle. Doctor Busby and Doctor Parr, both learned and pious clergymen, loved and reverenced Shakspeare. John Kemble had fast friends on the right reverend bench. Charles Young was almost domesticated in the family of the Bishop of Bath and Wells. And even now there are cathedral dignitaries and beneficed clergymen in the provinces who deem it not derogatory to their high position to attend poky little country theatres, and sit, grand in double-vested broadcloth and bowless white neckcloths, in the high places of the auditorium. Don't you remember how, in "Pendennis," Doctor Portman and Mr. Smirke, the curate, escort Mrs. P. and little Laura to witness the histrionic performances of Miss Fotheringay? Thus, while lawn sleeves, shovel hats, and silk aprons, have consistently patronised the Drama, the virulent opposition thereto has generally emanated from Geneva bands, and steeple-crowned hats, and closely-cropped heads. There: the secret is out. It is the old, old story of Cavalier and Roundhead—High and Low Church. Cavalier wants the Book of Sports read from the pulpit; would set up a Maypole in every parish; is in favour of church ales, and Easter and Whitsun-

tide merrymakings; would have no objection to a bull or a bear or two for the purpose of baiting; and would welcome the players, strolling or permanent, wherever he meets them. Roundhead is for having these same play-acting gentry set in the stocks as rogues and vagabonds, with a whipping at parting for luck. "Down with the Maypoles!" cries Roundhead, opposing fat pig and goose, maligning custard through the nose, and disparaging plum-pudding and mince-pies meanwhile.

How are we to reconcile persons who take such opposite views of things—looking, the one party on the golden, the other on the silver side of the shield? The worst of the matter is, that Cavalierism being the easier, merrier, jollier, and infinitely more comfortable creed, the idle and dissolute range themselves by preference on that side, and we who love the drama as an honest, cheerful, and ennobling recreation, are fain to put up with the company of questionable and sometimes disreputable allies. Once, it is true, the Stage had a High Church adversary, and a most formidable one; learned and pious and witty; no other indeed, than Jeremy Collier, the famous non-juring divine. He attacked the Drama of his time with terrible force and justice; for it was the Drama of Congreve, and Wycherly, and Farquhar: very witty and sparkling, no doubt, but wickedly and systematically immoral. Scarcely a comedy of those witty and sparkling gentlemen has kept the stage in our day; but the Puritans seem to have received as heirlooms all Collier's strictures and denunciations, and tell us with a furious sternness that a playhouse is a sink of Iniquity and an abode of Vice. Perhaps it may be so; we, the audience, don't go behind the scenes. The players must keep the sink very tightly sealed, and the abode tolerably select, for we do not read of their iniquity in the newspapers,

and they do not parade their Vice in Rotten Row or the Ring. I don't hear anything about actors being brought up before the magistrates for beating their wives or deserting their children, for forging bills of exchange or stealing gammons of bacon, for frequenting gaming-houses or creating disturbances in the public streets. I am given to understand that there never was but one actor hanged, and he was an Irishman, and is more than suspected to have been a mere mountebank of a posture-master who had turned player when his joints were too stiff to tumble.

Where, then, are the vice and iniquity the good Puritans tell us about? Not, I hope, in the musicians in the orchestra. They seem harmless creatures enough, with no more vicious propensities than might consist in their taking large quantities of snuff between the bars of the overture. Not surely in the act drop. That is usually a very beautiful allegorical tableau, charmingly painted by one of the three famous Williams, of the scenic art—Telbin, or Beverley, or Callcott. Stanfield and Robert were the great masters *en décor* in my time. Not among the audience. They sit patiently enough in pit, boxes, and gallery, and there cannot be much vice or iniquity in fanning one's self or sucking an orange, or in occasionally imitating the sound of a railway whistle, or in a baby meekly bleating now and then. A shame to bring babies to the theatre, nevertheless; but there are positively mothers who would drag their children in arms to the battle of Waterloo or the siege of Ticonderoga, if those great historical episodes were to occur again to-morrow. See, there is his Excellency the Russian Ambassador in a private box, with a head white, smooth, bare, polished as a billiard-ball, a large hungry jaw, and little bloodshot eyes. He wears his red ribbon, and a constellation of twinkling tinsel stars on the breast of his coat. There, in the stalls,

you may see an English duke and a countess or two, and wits and scholars and fine gentlemen if it be the first night of a new piece by a favourite author.

I look in vain for vice and iniquity before the curtain. And when that drapery is raised, do I behold them on the stage? Certainly vicious and iniquitous persons abound in the terrible tragedies of Shakspeare, and there are mean hounds and gossiping scandal-mongers in the comedies, and in the farces there are knaves and fools enough; but isn't vice punished, and isn't virtue rewarded, at the end of the fifth act? Isn't the knave brought to shame, and the fool to scorn? Don't these honest people on the stage seem to strive to paint wickedness in its darkest, and worth in its brightest colours? Don't we listen to a good deal of sermonising as to our duties, and of satire as to our faults—sermons enriched by eloquence and edged by poignant wit? Did the players take a lesson from Mr. Spurgeon, or Mr. Spurgeon from the players, think you? Can an exhibition be vicious or iniquitous in which the expression of a generous, a benevolent, a merciful feeling is sure to call forth a burst of applause from hundreds of horny hands in the gallery yonder? Does it advance the cause of vice and iniquity to be told that we must keep our marriage vows, and abide by our homes and love our children; that extravagance is sure to end in ruin, and folly and vanity in exposure and ridicule? Do we become children of vice or babes of iniquity when we cry our eyes out at a pathetic *dénouement*, or shake our sides with laughter at a droll farce? Would irreverence, scurrility, or sedition be permitted on the stage—I say by the audience—even if the objectionable matter had passed the licenser?—a sufficiently useless, conceited, dunder-headed functionary, my dear. Years ago it was Mr. George Colman the younger who was the licenser of plays; a wrinkled old gentleman with a fur collar, who lived

at Brompton, and, as people said, cut all the naughty words out of the plays submitted to him to garnish his own private conversation withal. At present there are from fifteen hundred to three thousand licensers in a large theatre when a new piece is performed; and very rigid, critical censors they are too. *They* would very soon scout vice and iniquity if they found them in dialogue or action. Vice and iniquity! vice and iniquity! I have used the words till they are hackneyed. Not skimming over these shallows shall you find them. Deeper and deeper must the plummet go; full fathom five through lace and embroidery; glancing by the gold and gems that heave on white bosoms, piercing through tinselled stars and radiant uniforms as through fustian vests and dimity bodices. Is it not written that the heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked? Be not too ready, then, Pharisee, to assume that beneath the mummer's spangled jerkin vice and iniquity are rampant. A deeper sin may be lurking beneath yon bombazine cassock, beneath the statesman's robes, beneath the purple of the great king.

For all which reasons, Miss, I would have you partake, in moderation—as of all other amusements—of the recreation of the playhouse. I would have you patronise operatic entertainments more sparingly. I love music, admire the lyric stage. "Music hath charms" (you know the rest), and is unquestionably softening and humanising. Witness the working men of Bradford, roaring forth their oratorio choruses in magnificent time and tune, and the Penryn choristers, to whom Her Majesty presented a silver cup, as a token of her admiration, only lately. But after witnessing once or twice the performance of a good opera, you may hear its best *morceaux* played or sung at home, at parties, or at concerts. There can be no necessity for you to go night

after night to the same lyric theatre, and listen to the same opera sung to words in a language you do not understand. That you delight in the expression or delivery, fire or pathos, of such and such a tenor or soprano singer, is a consideration that does not weigh with me. The pleasure you derive from an *ut de poitrine*, or a coruscation of *fioritures*, is frivolous, and more than frivolous, sensual. You plead the example of a picture with which you are pleased. You may learn something from a picture. Through the eye the heart may be corrected. You learn from an oratorio. The strains, solemn and sublime, of the "Messiah," or "St. Paul," elevate, inspire, awe you. One goes home graver, sadder, thinking very deeply on serious things, after such music.

You may learn much from one of the tender, graceful, yet homely English ballads. Did you ever hear Miss Poole sing "Wapping Old Stairs" in that pure mellow voice of hers, and marvellously distinct enunciation, in which every word has its place, and is precious as every gem in a necklace of orient pearls? 'Tis but a humble, pitch-and-tar, waterside song, this "Wapping Old Stairs;" the words merely relating to tobacco boxes, and sailors' trousers, and grog, and Susan from Deptford, and similarly vulgar things; but there is something in both air and words suggestive of love, and fidelity, and resignation, and true womanly trust and pity: an April shower and sunshine of the heart, indeed, that make these old eyes overflow whenever I hear the dear old simple ditty. King William the Fourth was very fond of "Wapping Old Stairs," and so was the good Queen Adelaide, the simple sailor's wife, who gave away three parts of her income in charity, and when she died desired that she might be carried to the grave by sailors.

Be you, therefore, very fond of operas; but rather accept an invitation for the Haymarket or the Olympic than

for the Italian lyric establishments. You will hear but harmonious tinkle-tinkling there, after all; and besides, I repeat, if you are *amourachée* of the airs in vogue, you may hear them at home, or at St. James's Hall, or at your friend the Euterpomani's, or even ground on a barrel organ outside your window in Pagoda Square. You can't do that with a play-book—with a single exception, the works of Shakspeare. I never could *read* the dramatic works of Bulwer or Sheridan Knowles. They want acting to be appreciated. In my youth, our French master used to set us tasks out of the "School for Scandal," to translate into the Gallic tongue, and I thought Sheridan's masterpiece the woefullest, dreariest stuff that a girl of fourteen ever waded through. To read a play without going to see it performed is like reading on an empty stomach the Bill of Fare of the Lord Mayor's dinner. Of what avail are all those tureens of real turtle, when not the tiniest modicum of calipash or calipee falls to your share?

It may be that in my semidiatribe against undue patronage of operas, there may be something of the selfishness of my sofa. I am to see the *carissimi luoghi* no more. I confess—against the grain, but still confess—that I should like to hear the Guiglini whom you call incomparable; his languishing notes, his spasms of tenderness. Was he more pathetic than Nourrit, I wonder? Does Mario surpass Rubini? A Mademoiselle Tietjens also you speak of—is the woman's name Titiens, or Tietjens, or what? She is haughty, commanding, superb. Is she equal to Pasta? Is she equal to Sontag? Who is this Mademoiselle Piccolomini you describe as joyous, vivacious, saucy, fascinating, a captivating actress, but an imperfect singer:—yet one who makes a *furore* wherever she goes? Since when has the *cameriera cantante*—the singing chambermaid—become a prima donna? Have you,

tell me true, a female singer on your stage who can equal, nay, who can approach the enchanting, the divine Maria Malibran? But why should I ask you, my dear? She belongs to another age, like many of the great singers I have named. Catalani, Ronzi di Begnis, Donzelli, Curioni, Velluti, Blasis, what do you know of these?

You speak to me of English tenors. Mr. Sims Reeves, according to you, has a voice like a silver clarion. It is worth making a pilgrimage to Loretto with peas in your shoes to hear him sing "My Pretty Jane," or "Come into the Garden, Maud." You talk about other tenors: Harrisons, Perrens, Eliot Galers; *je ne les connais pas, ces gens.* I can remember a Mr. Incledon who used to sing the "Storm;" that was when I was very young indeed. I can remember a Mr. Sinclair, one of the sweetest of singers. And I can likewise remember the famous John Braham, a grand singer, a pigmy in stature, but a giant in song: a little black-whiskered, blue-gilled man, who with a few notes could melt you to tears or rouse you to enthusiasm. Ah! to hear him sing the "Death of Nelson," or "Farewell, my trim-built Wherry." I present my compliments to your English tenors, and beg to know if, in their wildest accesses of vanity, they can hope to excel or to equal John Braham.

Among the theatres you have visited, you mention the Adelphi, which, it appears, has been thoroughly rebuilt, and is resuscitated as a most sumptuous and commodious little *salle*, somewhat after the Parisian model. The old Adelphi was a very stifling, uncomfortable little cupboard of a place, but very celebrated in its day. The great Sir Walter Scott was a friend of one of its earliest conductors, Mr. Terry, and in Lockhart's "Life" you may read some friendly, affectionate hints on the perils of management, sent by the Scotch baronet to the English actor. Baronets trouble them-

selves about theatres in quite a different manner, now. I remember Sir Charles going, years and years ago, to see a dreadful piece, called "Tom and Jerry," at the old Adelphi. Was it before, or after that, the theatre was called the Sanspareil? Before, I think. This improper performance took the town by storm. To the ladies, of course, it was tabooed, but I have heard that two viscounts, an archbishop, and a proctor from Doctors' Commons, paid full price to the pit on the ninety-second night of its performance. Sir Charles was a great playgoer, and, like his Gracious Master, was fondly attached to—but soft! Let me see: haven't I witnessed the performance of the inimitable John Reeve, as Marmaduke Magog, in the "Wreck Ashore?" Yes, and we had a proscenium box, two-and-twenty years since, to see a dramatised version of Mr. Dickens's "Oliver Twist." I remember it as though it were yesterday. Clever Mr. Yates was the Jew Fagin; the terrible O'Smith was Sykes; Wilkinson, an extraordinary man with a crabbed face, played Mr. Brownlow's friend, Mr. Grimwig; and Mrs. Keeley—yes, the delightful, chatty, humorous, good-natured, perennial Mrs. Keeley—was the Oliver Twist, and is the only survivor, I believe, of that bright band.

I can recall, too, a wonderful piece called "Die Hexen am Rhein," with gnomes and witches and salamanders, and real water, into which people jumped. Also, another piece which the ladies were sternly prohibited from seeing, but went to see it in considerable numbers, nevertheless. That wonderful Mrs. Keeley was the hero again, and wore smalls, and a flapped waistcoat, and a coat with large cuffs; and with a round, bullet, closely-shorn head, and roguish, twinkling eyes, looked the very image of Mr. George Cruikshank's etching of Jack Sheppard. I think that was the name of the piece. A very fat man, with a rich husky voice, whose name has quite escaped me,

played a part called Bluenose or Bottleskin, or some such name, and sang a song about his nose, which was encored every night; and I know there was a ballad in the piece, written by Mr. Rodwell, to words in some inconceivable thieves' jargon I disdain to recall, but with, perhaps, the sweetest melody ever heard since "Cherry Ripe." And then I lost sight of the Adelphi altogether. You say you were there on Thursday, and saw a startling melodrama, called the "Dead Heart." From the description you give me it must be very thrilling. You omitted to give me the author's name, but I should say, from the nature of the incidents, that it must be by some disciple of M. Alexandre Dumas. A wonderful man, my dear. I saw his "Christine" in Paris, in 1830. It lasted six hours, and was called a *Trilogie*, which, I believe, means three plays in one; and there were duels fought, and ladies run away with, all in consequence of this terrible melodrama, the week afterwards.

The most interesting item you give me with respect to the Adelphi is, that the money and cheque takers, and the box openers, are all females. What! is the old reign of insolence, extortion, and sulkiness, at an end? Are ladies no longer liable to be bullied and insulted because they don't care about giving a shilling or eighteenpence for a greasy, flimsy playbill, worth, perhaps, a quarter of a farthing? These new attendants, you say, are positively civil and obliging; take care of your bonnet for nothing, and are only stern when they refuse to take the money which the public, in spite of the printed placards liberally displayed about the theatre, persist in offering them. I cannot sufficiently congratulate the frequenters of theatres for this wholesome reform, or commend Mr. Benjamin Webster too highly on his liberality and public spirit in abolishing a monstrous annoyance and imposition. The theatre was crowded, you say, the night you

went to see the "Dead Heart." I like to hear of theatres being crowded, and of people amusing themselves. Rational recreation keeps people from hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness, and from coveting their neighbour's house, and his wife, and his ox, and his ass. Which is best, I ask; to pay our shilling to the gallery and have a good evening's entertainment, or to wait till the Sunday evening and trudge Wapping-wards to St. George's in the East, there to cough over the Litany, and hoot a silly priest and his choristers?

The Princess's—yes, you have been there; but Mr. Charles Kean's gorgeous Shakspearian spectacles—William bound in gold and morocco, with tooled edges and illuminated margins—no longer attract crowds to Oxford Street. The house is in a transition state, your critical friends tell you; and though the new lessee, Mr. Harris, means well, he doesn't exactly seem to know what he means as yet. However, you saw a capital and irreproachably moral drama, called "Home Truths," and after that a wonderful little Jew man, with a more wonderful nose, who played a dancing dervish in a *divertissement*, and, in the most wonderful manner of all, spun round and round like a teetotum, till your eyes ached, and you thought the dancer's head was off. Shanko Fanko—who, with the exception of words of four syllables, can spell through the *Times* tolerably well—read me the account of this wonderful dancing, or rather spinning dervish; and likewise an explanatory note which appeared a day or two afterwards from the critic who had erroneously asserted that the Dervish wore a false proboscis. It appears that the nose is a "boon of nature, not a work of art." I don't know the critic, but he must be a marvellously comic-minded man to put so much humour into so few words.

I should like very much to go to that droll little theatre in the Strand, of which you profess yourself to be enraptured.

It does not seem much bigger, you tell me, than a bird-cage, and one can see, from the stalls or the private boxes, the faintest corking on the eyebrows of the actors, and the minutest grain of pearl powder and the most delicate blush of rouge on the cheeks of the actresses. You say these accomplished persons dress beautifully, in the very best taste, and in the richest materials, to say nothing of real lace and undeniably genuine jewellery. Well they may, in so small a theatre, and in an age when double-barrelled opera-glasses are so powerful. What class of entertainments do you tell me are produced at the Strand? Farces.—Very well. *Petites comédies.*—Nothing could be better. Burlesque Extravaganzas.—Ah! I know. You mean those whimsical and fanciful parodies of fairy tales or classic fables, for the concoction of which, before I left the world, Mr. Planché was so famous. But I suppose he has left off writing for the stage now, as I read some time since that he had been gazetted by Royal letters patent to be a Morning Herald—no, it was a Crimson Dragon, or a Red Cross Knight, or something fabulous and chivalrous of that description; but I know the appointment had something to do with the Heralds' College in Doctors' Commons, where Sir Charles once went to look up our pedigree, and paid forty pounds for a piece of parchment with a coloured illustration and a large seal; but he had the satisfaction of seeing a solemn gentleman with a white neckcloth step out of a brougham at the door, whom they told him was Garter.

There is a great deal of dancing in Burlesque Extravaganza apparently. Also of comic singing. And from the description you give me of the entertainment you witnessed, I am afraid that the objectionable practice of putting young ladies into male costume is somewhat too liberally resorted to. I should perfectly agree with you that there was no

resisting Miss Marie Wilton if I had ever experienced an attack from that young lady; but I take all the flattering things you and your critical friends—they worry me sometimes, those critical friends—are pleased to say about Miss Marie Wilton's wit, and grace, and agility. I am afraid you know too many critics, Louisa; and when I consider how those self-appointed censors increase and multiply in these latter days, I can't help thinking of a story of old Lady Strange, the widow of the famous engraver, and the lady who in youth saved her husband from the soldiers who sought his life, by sheltering him under her hoop petticoat. The critics remind me of the story, and they may consider its application as intended for them if they so choose. Lady Strange lived to a very great age, and a long time after the death of her husband; but she was to the last, of her dear partner's political creed, a staunch Jacobite. It chanced one day that a gentleman in her company, talking of bygone politics, chanced to speak of the Chevalier Charles Edward, by the name the adherents of the House of Hanover usually gave him: that of the "Pretender." Whereat cried old Lady Strange, usually very taciturn, but with a wonderful sharpness and alacrity—"Pretender, forsooth! and be d——d to you." And that is what I say to some of the critics. You must pardon, my dear, the use of a naughty word; you must remember that it was a long time ago when ladies were more frank-spoken in their conversation than at present, and, moreover, that the ugly expletive in question was made use of by a lady of quality and title. If you are very much shocked, draw a pen carefully through the word when you show this letter to your friends; and as for the critics—but I check my pen, remembering that in my humdrum way I am always criticising somebody or something.

There are three wonderful humorists, you tell me, at the

Strand: one a lady, the very perfection of archness and quaint oddity without exaggeration, a Miss Charlotte Saunders; and two Dromios—two gentlemen I mean—Messrs. Clark and Rogers—who, without interfering in the least with each other's fun, are excruciatingly comic. And Miss Martha Oliver, I learn from your letter, has the most beautiful eyes, and the sweetest smile, and the most silvery-speaking voice you have heard; and Miss Swanborough, the fair manageress of this prosperous house—which you tell me is nightly attended by the *élite* of the aristocracy—is graceful, and dignified, and eminently tasteful. Sure, the days of Madame Vestris, and Mrs. Honey and Mrs. Waylett, must have returned again.

Dearest Louisa, my gossip about plays and players is fast drawing to a close; but I cannot pass over in silence your rapturous eulogium of a wonderful little man called Robson—one of the half-dozen people, they say, who is successful in making the Queen laugh—who, according to all I hear, not only succeeds, night after night, in making people scream themselves hoarse with merriment, but—a better faculty, my dear—makes them weep their eyes red with sympathising grief. Be assured that we have heard often and favourably of this Mr. Robson, even in this remote Pumpwell. You have seen him, you say, in the "Porter's Knot," and in "Retained for the Defence." Doctor Gradus, of the grammar school, who went purposely to town in the spring, and attended the Olympic Theatre in the company of a person of quality intimately connected with the court, says that you should see Robson in "Daddy Hardacre," in "The Wandering Minstrel," and especially in a wonderful parody of a Greek play, in the Italian version of which Madame Ristori amazed and astonished all Europe, called "Medea." Doctor Gradus talks in his good, solemn, somewhat pompous

way of Robson, as though he were a national institution—a perpetual censor, appointed, not only to hold the mirror up to nature, and show vice her own image, but to commend to our admiration and emulation such qualities as rugged fidelity and loving disinterestedness.

"No man can paint, to the minutest hair-breadth of verisemblance," said the Doctor to me, over his fourth cup of tea last Tuesday evening, "the petty meannesses, and spites, and jealousies that disfigure humanity, as in the marvellous and life-like, heart-searching, and soul-knowing manner peculiar to Robson; but, on the other hand, no actor, comic or tragic, can give us so graphic a portraiture of a true friend and an honest man. Madam," the Doctor, with grave emphasis, went on; "if Pumpwell-le-Springs were not a hundred and eighty-seven miles from the great metropolis, and did not the parents of some of my pupils object as a matter of principle to dramatic entertainments, I would give the entire school a half-holiday to-morrow for the express purpose of seeing Robson; and I believe, Madam, that I should be tempted to subject to the correction of stripes that perverse and obdurate boy who did not consider Robson to be the finest actor he had ever seen."

"Doctor Gradus," I replied, "I have the highest respect for your critical acumen and judgment. Will you be so good as to ring for Shanko Fanko? I want my maid and my bed-candle."

And lo! as I pen these lines, Shanko Fanko answers a similar summons, and departs to fetch chambermaid and candlestick. Adieu, my pet!

CONSTANCE CHESTERFIELD.

LETTER THE EIGHTH.

ON THE BEHAVIOUR OF YOUNG LADIES.

My treasure is aware that, from the first, these letters were not destined for her eyes alone. They were intended to be somewhat more catholic in their scope and aim. I accorded permission to my Louisa to impart the contents of my communications to her female acquaintances; nay, more—and herein may lie some pardonable vanity on my part—to collect their opinions, and seek their suffrages, on the epistolary merits of the lorn old woman at Pumpwell. Am I the first correspondent, think you, who has written with a view to an audience somewhat more extended than the recipient of her letters? Had Mr. Walpole no one save Sir Horace Mann in his mind when he wrote? May not Brother Abelard, when he indited those fervent epistles to Sister Héloïse, have reflected, with a sort of simper, that they, or portions of them, might be shown *en cachette* to some chosen female confidants of the Paraclète? Did Madame de Sévigné imagine that her letters would be seen by no one but her pert doctor from the country? And, finally, might not my great namesake, my Lord Chesterfield himself—and I believe your papa was really, albeit remotely, of that illustrious family, my dear—have intended his unrivalled letters to be perused by a good many more people besides that son who, I believe, requited the good advice so liberally

and elegantly bestowed on him, by growing up an intolerable coxcomb, and a confirmed rake?

Thus, Louisa, when you tell me that you have availed yourself of the license granted to you, and that you have shown these letters to a circle sufficiently large of your acquaintance, I am not in the least surprised to hear that while some express themselves much pleased with the matter they contain, and with the style in which that matter is couched, another section of readers, as considerable, perhaps, as the first, make no effort to conceal their extreme dislike and distaste for all that I have written. I should be a very silly, as well as a very vain person if I did not expect—and had not from the first expected—such an alternate condemnation and applause. Was it so long since, my dear, that in a volume of elegant extracts you read a certain fable relating to an old man, his son, and his donkey? Only yesterday, turning over a collection of perhaps the finest letters that ever were written in this world, I came, in the pages of the "Spectator," upon a little apologue written by Mr. Joseph Addison. As it bears somewhat forcibly on the matter in hand I will transcribe it.

"My worthy friend Sir Roger," writes the Spectator, "when we are talking of the malice of parties, very frequently tells us an accident that happened to him when he was a schoolboy, which was about the time when the feuds ran high between the Roundheads and Cavaliers. This worthy knight, being then but a stripling, had occasion to inquire the way to St. Anne's Lane, upon which the person whom he spoke to, instead of answering the question, called him a young Popish cur, and asked him who had made Anne a saint. The boy, being in some confusion, inquired of the next he met, which was the way to Anne's Lane, but was called a prick-eared hound for his pains; and, instead of being shown the way, was told

that she had been a saint before he was born, and would be one after he was hanged. 'Upon this,' says Sir Roger, 'I did not think fit to repeat the former question, but going into every lane in the neighbourhood, asked what they called the name of that lane.' By which ingenious artifice he found out the place he inquired after, without giving offence to any party."

It is obvious that were I to follow, by analogy, the plan adopted by Sir Roger de Coverley, I should, in despair at not being able to please all parties, and wishing to give offence to none, resort to the safe and pacific method of not writing these letters at all. Yet as, for very many reasons, I feel bound to write and to continue them, and as I am not quite certain whether, in case I was dumb, I might not find some persons who would make a crime of my silence, I offer my respectful compliments and drop a reverent courtesy to those who like and those who dislike me; merely hinting to the latter, that Sir Charles once told me there were few follies so pernicious as eating olives, drinking absinthe, and smoking cigars, if those luxuries (to some) were nauseous to, and disagreed with you. Whereupon I resume the thread of my curriculum of counsel per the penny post.

Unceasing, darling, as is my anxiety for your welfare and your happiness, I have been occupied by a constant solicitude as regards the amusements of which you partake. It should be a matter of rejoicing for mothers separated from their daughters, now-a-days, that the life they lead, in what is commonly called the gay world of London, may be frivolous and idle enough, but can scarcely be dissipated or dangerous. When the Rev. Mr. Gisborne wrote upon the "Duties of Women," and when good Mrs. Hannah More undertook to make the world of fine-ladyism moral, there were really many dangers to which a young lady

was exposed, and there was really a considerable amount of what we should now call dissipation in fashionable female society. An evening party in high life—whether it was called a Drum, a Rout, or an Assembly—was very little better than a brilliant gambling house, and a larger per-centage present of diamonds, brocade skirts, and wax candles. At the sacred palace of St. James's even, at stated times, the male and female aristocracy gambled furiously under the auspices of the Groom Porter. Young ladies lost not only their pocket money, and married ladies their pin money, but contracted in addition large "debts of honour," after losing at hazard or E. O., or "Spadille, Manille, and Basto." What young lady plays cards now-a-days, unless, indeed, she joins in a round game at Christmas time, is pressed into a whist-party in the country by some ancient tabbies like those by whom I am surrounded, or takes a hand at piquet with her gouty old papa?

Fifty years since young ladies used to bet desperately at Newmarket; at present their operations on the turf are confined—and they must be boisterous young things even for that—to a share in a harmless sweepstake, or a half-dozen pair of glove bet on a horse they never heard of before half-past two o'clock on the Derby Day. There are no Mrs. Corneley's masquerades now—not the debased Saturnalia one reads of in the newspapers, attended by but dissipated men and vile creatures of the other sex, but by the thoughtless and reckless of both sexes in the very highest classes of society. There are no impudent play-books and demoralising novels for girls to read on the sly—a course of reading not unfrequently culminating in an elopement with the lowest of Irish fortune-hunters, or an intrigue with the footman. Look at the scrupulously unobjectionable list of books which your annual subscription will procure you from the respectable Mr. Mudie's, and

consider how pure young-lady literature must be in an epoch when some mammas consider even such novels as Mr. Thackeray's "Vanity Fair," and Miss Bronté's "Jane Eyre," dangerous reading for their daughters! True there are yet French novels, and naughty ones, but they are banished from all genteel houses; and it is one of the most curious circumstances in the career of that strange man who is now absolute Ruler of a neighbouring Empire, that he—who had not led the most regular or blameless of lives in his youth—no sooner came to power than he began sternly to set his face against improprieties in literature and art. "*Quand le Diable est vieux il se fait hermite,*" runs the proverb; and it is certain that the Ruler in question is gradually converting the most vicious city in Europe into the soberest and most decorous of capitals. Perhaps, when that long-threatened invasion of our shores by his armies takes place, the Conqueror's first act may be—for the sins of "auld lang syne"—to rase Crockford's to the ground, although it is now but a harmless eating-house, and sow its wicked site with salt.

Thus, then, you see that I consider a modern young English lady to be a much more *rangée* damsel than was her great-grandmother in her maidenhood. No beautiful Miss Gunnings, no lovely brazen-faced Duchesses of Kingston, no Georginas of Devonshire even, canvassing for Westminster elections, with foxes' brushes amidst the plumes in their hats, and giving butchers a kiss for a vote, would be tolerated within the pale of polite society. Molly Lepel would be thought improper. Belinda would not dare to receive half the outspoken compliments on her diamonds she once heard with pleasure; and a gentleman would be ostracised from genteel circles who made the name of a "reigning beauty" the subject for a "toast" at a bacchanalian meeting, drinking as many glasses to her as there were letters in her name.

Besides, there are no "reigning beauties" in our time. The age of mediocrity has brought even female charms under its dull sway; and we have five hundred thousand average pretty girls and no Semiramis, no Belle Stuart, no Fair Geraldine, to stand out a Sun of Beauty in a firmament of twinkling prettinesses—the "little people of the skies."

A great Beauty, at this day, is usually some singing or dancing woman, about whom the young men rave, whom one cannot meet in society, and who comes to some deplorable end somewhere abroad. True it is that some silly women yet arrogate to themselves, or have thrust on them, the transient title of "Beauty" or "Belle," which they no more deserve than Mr. Carlyle's "Gretchen Maultasche," or "Margaret with the pouchmouth." The "Belle" of Pumpwell-le-Springs, my dear, is eight-and-thirty, and has shoulders like a clothes-horse, that you might hang huckaback towels on. I believe she founds her claim to being a "Belle" on the fact that she once met Count d'Orsay in the crush-room of the opera, and that he whispered to Lord Chesterfield—not one of our branch of the family—"*Elle est furieusement belle la grande blonde.*" The "grande blonde" has become a gaunt, middle-aged woman, with red ringlets, a hard skin, and the shoulders I speak of. When the skin was supple, the shoulders without salt-cellars, and the ringlets could be called, without a great stretch of the imagination, "golden auburn," she refused some half-dozen advantageous offers. Now she is fain to ogle the limping half-pays of Pumpwell, and I believe would marry Mr. Lampkins if he could muster up enough courage to ask her. "Belles," forsooth! I met the "Belle of the West Riding" once at an Assize Ball, and I declare she squinted; and, by her gait, seemed to have one leg longer than the other. The term of "Belle" has been misused even to caricature and contempt; and Mr. Nedwards,

who is not devoid of satirical powers, tells me that he once knew two stunted young persons, with cheeks like kidney potatoes, who, because they were twin-sisters, and always dressed alike, in yellow, suffered themselves to be called the "Belles of Berners Street," in which thoroughfare—I don't in the least know where it is—their mamma kept a lodging-house.

Only, my dear, as I am given to understand, in the United States of America do you meet from time to time with young women of such rare, peerless, enchanting, imperial beauty, that you must, perforce, give them the titles of "Belle" and "Beauty." They shine for a season or two—seasons brief, triumphant, brilliant—at Saratoga, or West Point, or Staten Island. They come to Europe, are presented at foreign courts, captivate hereditary Grand Dukes, make Plenipotentiaries sigh, and Knights of the Golden Fleece tremble. They are heard of occasionally as birds of passage, in London at Mivart's, in Brighton at the Bedford, where they declare the English women to be cold, proud, ill and over-dressed, and *guindées*. What becomes of them after that? They marry, I presume, and are happy; but are they Belles any longer? Do they still maintain their thrones any sceptres unchallenged at Saratoga, and West Point, and Staten Island? Alas! Mr. Keziah Tiffany, member of Congress, U.S., who is here, taking the waters for his liver, and who was Secretary to the American Legation in London some years since, tells me that American Beauties "*vivent ce que vivent les roses.*" They fade and wither, my dear, and are quite old women at thirty-five. A dreadful thing to consider—this state of an old wrinkled woman who has been a Beauty, and lives but upon regrets and bitter memories, that are the alms that are flung contemptuously by Time to Beauty departed. I have known quite hideous young women expand and flourish late in life into cosy, comely matrons; but how

is it with those who have been beautiful, and are so no more; who are mocked by their looking-glasses, and pitied by their ladies' maids? Where are the artists who intrigued and battled to obtain a sitting for a portrait? Where the sculptors who entreated and implored to be allowed to take a cast of the dainty hand, the tiny foot? How old and faded look the sheets of songs and duets dedicated to them by obsequious music-masters in the days of their comeliness! The fashionable *coiffeur* in Regent Street had a waxen image made in their likeness, and crowds used to gather round the golden-haired effigy in the shop window. Vanity! the dummy has long since gone to the melting-pot.

See; among my books at home I have a little volume full of old Gothic, semi-barbarous, French ballads, by one François Villon, who wrote, I believe, long before either Ronsard or Clément Marot. There is a grim ballad of his in this collection which I read almost every day for my sins. The argument is very short. Three hideous, decrepit, wrinkled, palsied old women are sitting in a foul hovel—*à croupetons*—crouching half monkey, half Turk like, round a fire, and trying to warm their skinny hands before the blaze. They are clothed in rags. They have no money, no food, no home but this hovel by the side of a ditch. "Ah!" cries Goody First. "Ah! for the hardness of the times. Where are the days when the white loaf and the red wine were always in the hutch; when the good man brought home game for a savoury stew, and showed me the broad piece the prince had flung him at the end of the day's hunting?" "Tush!" cries Goody Second. "Tush, Harridans! Canst thou restore the days when I went clad in stout blue home-spun, instead of filthy tatters—when the thatch was warm above us, and the floor clean strewn with rushes every day—when I had seven sons, stout, and bold, and tall—seven sons who went to the wars,

and left their bones there for the crows to pick?" "Peace, beldames all!" cries Goody Third, the foulest-favoured, leanest, raggedest of them all. She rises to her full height, and stands almost infernal against the lurid glare of the fire. "Oh, miserable memories! oh, paltry reckonings of clothes and food, and warmth and yellow dross!" she cries. "I had no squalling brats—I would have spurned them in my pride. But kings' sons doffed their jewelled bonnets to me, and bent till their plumes mingled with their chargers' manes to whisper words of love to me. I tell you that I had bracelets that flashed in the sunlight, and robes of silk and velvet that swept the marble floors of palaces. I tell you that I was waited upon by pages on bended knee, and that the minstrels tuned their lutes to sing my praises. Oh, I am fallen! I am fallen! for I never loved, and I became old; and the pages rose up and spat at me, and the minstrels twanged their lutes and sang ribald songs in my disfavour, and the kings' sons laughed and rode away, for I had nothing more to sell. Ye hags! I was the Fair Haulmiere!" Whereat, hearing the name of one who had been the beautifullest, and the proudest, and the wickedest woman of a wicked time, the two remaining crones muttered, even in their abasement, words of loathing and contempt, and gathered their rags round them, as though they feared pollution from one who had been so great, and was so fallen. Shut up, shut up the book of Gothic rhymes; for I, too, have been young and fair, and—heigho! let us come back to the behaviour of young ladies, who are, I am pleased to maintain, in some respects, better behaved now than in times gone by.

In Doctor Swift's "Polite Conversation" young ladies swear. Horace Walpole writes of a young lady, moving in the very first circles, who used to sing—the term is his, not mine—

"flash songs;" and Mr. Richardson, who wrote "Pamela" and "Clarissa Harlowe," was the pet and *enfant chéri* of half the fine ladies of England, who looked upon his novels as models of delicacy, refinement, and true morality; though, to tell the truth, the good man treated of such matters and in such downright language, that it would be considered as downright treason to discuss or even mention them now in society.

Young ladies are *so* well-behaved. You have heard of Doctor Doddridge, my dear, the great theological scholar and divine—the purest-minded, holiest-lived man a vicious world has seen since the days of good Bishop Jeremy Taylor. What do you think was a favourite amusement of young people in the days when saintly Philip Doddridge was a stripling? They used to spread a table-cloth or a large sheet on the stairs, on which the young ladies used to sit; and then the young gentlemen who were at the foot of the stairs used to take hold of the bottom corners of the table-cloth, and try to pull that, and the young ladies into the bargain, down pell-mell. Who wouldn't be shocked at such a game of romps in eighteen hundred and fifty-nine? The art of making "cheeses" is, I dare say, gone out among young ladies at boarding-school. "Hunt-the-slipper," out of a north-country farm-house, is looked upon as unpardonable vulgarity. Every recurring Christmas, I am told, sees fewer games of "forfeits" in genteel families. The "Spanish merchant," "Tell trade," and the "Lubber's exercise," I hear, are falling into desuetude. I could believe that we were growing really moral, if I did not read sometimes of a confessional in Belgravia, and of a certain court which you enter from Westminster Hall, and where a certain Judge sits in a court for divorce and matrimonial causes, hearing the very saddest and most scandalous tales. Moreover, in those rude, improper, romping, and frank-spoken days I have

spoken of, the reports of such dismal trials, and those for breaches of promise of marriage, were mainly confined to musty old law books, which only the gentlemen with the wigs and gowns opened and consulted. Now we have them, hot and hot, in the columns of twenty newspapers every morning at breakfast time. It is a thing to wonder at and admire, the good behaviour of modern young ladies. What an awfully improper thing it would be now for a gallant princess defending a fortress to make a vow, like she who founded the *couleur Isabelle*, that she would not change her underlinen till the besiegers retired from the walls! Where is the Lady Godiva who would obey Earl Leofric's wild whim to save a people from taxation? Alack-a-day! the modern Godiva's style of costume affords plenty of employment to Peeping Toms, and the people are only taxed the more to pay for my Lady Godiva's studied *déshabille*. Where is the young lady who would imitate the heroic girl who shielded Robert Strange from the bloodhounds of Cumberland beneath the ample circumference of her hoop?

There, my dear, perhaps I am relapsing into my cynical mood, and am unjust to the present generation of young women. If great occasions arose, if imminent perils environed and threatened us, it may be that English girls would prove themselves worthy of the name of their ancestresses, and would cast a great deal of mock good behaviour to the winds, and do a great many things, now lisped and simpered against as "shocking," for the glory of English girlhood. Mind, I am not advocating Joan of Arc-ism. Because the country may be in danger, I have no desire to see young ladies assume pantaloons of chain-mail, or their modern substitutes, knickerbockers and gaiters, and forthwith, wielding a two-handed sword, bestride a great white war-horse *en cavalier*, as in Mr.

Etty's big picture. Leave rifle clubs alone, young ladies, and don't meddle too much with Toxopholite societies. The commanding, Field Marshal, Amazonian woman is a rarity. Boadicea had better put up with a whipping, and bring her action for aggravated assault, than head the insurgent Iceni, give battle to the Romans, and end by taking poison; and I am sure, if the invader were marching on London, that I should be one more to vote—if I had a vote—for our dear Queen, and the children, and the treasure, and the bank-books, and the national pictures, being sent north of Trent for safety, while the men went forward to fight; rather than insist on a sort of parody on the famous behaviour of Queen Elizabeth under similar circumstances, and expect that the Sovereign should put on casque and corslet, harangue the troops at Tilbury Fort, and, returning to London, dine off pork and peas at the "King's Head," to show her "foul scorn" of the French, and her magnanimous stomach against them. Women have a different mission in war, and I believe, did the necessity occur, they would be found once more to be fully equal to its fulfilment. Only with extreme unfrequency are the functions they are called on to perform, belligerent. Sometimes it may happen that a Margaret Douglas must bar the door with her arm; that the Carthaginian ladies must give their hair for bowstrings; that a Maid of Saragossa must point and fire the cannon; that a Jeanne Hachette must drive back a host; that a Charlotte de la Turnouille must hold her own against the Roundheads; that delicate, tenderly-nurtured English girls, made valiant by peril worse than death, must be among the bravest of the beleaguered in an Indian mud fort, fetch the failing ammunition to the ramparts, serve out the scanty rations, keep watch and ward with, and give life and spirit to, the vexed garrison, and be ready to spring the mine when the last hope is gone, and the Sepoys are pressing

to the assault. But war and tumult evoke and develope more womanly ministrations than these.

If a fair young prince, driven from the throne of his ancestors, hunted like a fox by his enemies, were wandering naked, fugitive, and penniless, but with a price of thirty thousand pounds on his head, I do believe there would be found once more a gently-daring Flora Macdonald to shelter and protect him, and make use of every weapon in her armory of feminine subterfuges to save that comely young head from the headsman's axe. For it is woman's part to assuage the horror and mitigate the black wickedness of war. The first drop of oil was cast on the raging waters of the Crimean strife by the wife of a Russian general, Madame Osten-Sacken, who tended with quite an angelic pity and tenderness a poor little wounded midshipman taken out of the wreck of the Tiger. What had she to do with Hango massacres and Crimean *guet-apens*, good woman? She only recognised the sacred instincts of long-suffering maternity. Afterwards, the vials of womanly compassion were poured out in abundance on the contending hosts. Now it was the Empress Eugénie and her ladies scraping lint for the wounded. Now it was Cocotte or Babette—some sturdy little *vivandière*, in scarlet breeches and a white apron, a mob cap on her head, and a keg of spirits by her side—kneeling down by some fainting Zouave, and succouring him amid a rain of bullets. Now it was brave old Mother Seacole, most Samaritan of sutlers, trudging up to the front with her brandy flask, and holding it to the lips alike of plumed staff officer and white-fringed drummer, and nursing big grenadier guardsmen like babies. And now it was the pearl and pride of womanhood, Florence Nightingale, leaving her easel, her Greek Testament, her splendid home, to go forth into the wilderness of war and do good. Ladies of England, Ladies

of England, lay your hands upon the busks of your corsets, just whereabout you think your hearts should be, and confess that according to your code of good behaviour many of the things done by Florence Nightingale would have been denounced a few years since as, genteelly speaking, "shocking." I don't say that such would be the case now; for Nightingale-ism has become, since the first shining example, somewhat of a fashion, and some ladies are almost too ready to call themselves "Sisters," and dress the sores of Lazarus. But think on what Florence Nightingale had to go through. To encounter brutal stupidity, and now sulky, now malevolent thwartings; to mix with the felonry of the Levant, and the scum of Scutari, and the rascal following of a great army; to be unceasingly in the midst of horrible sights, and sounds, and stenches; to go through all this violence, wretchedness, pollution, with a meek quiet face, calm eye, and steady hand, intent only on her Master's business. Did you ever see the squalid springless cart in which Miss Nightingale rode about in the Crimea?—the comfortless dray they called her "carriage?" Can you imagine the horror of those Crimean and Constantinople hospitals as she first saw them, bare, cheerless, grimy, noisome, without comforts or even necessaries? Have you any idea of the scenes through which the heroic woman had to pass? A dear friend, now dead, who was in the East when that appalling drama was being played out, told me that he was in a ward of Scutari hospital, when a batch of soldiers wounded at Inkerman were brought to Miss Nightingale and her nurses from the transport which had conveyed the poor fellows across the Black Sea. There was one soldier horribly wounded, and who had suffered more horrible neglect, who, as they laid him shrieking on his pallet, all unconscious of his vicinage, burst into a flood of dreadful execrations and vile language. A surgeon who was

there, "shocked" by such an unseemly exhibition in the presence of a lady, laid his hand on the poor wretch's arm, and angrily bade him remember where he was, and "behave himself;" but MISS NIGHTINGALE, who was on the other side of the bed, looked up into the doctor's face with a calm sternness, and said, "Don't you see, sir, that the poor man is in pain, and does not know what he is saying? Leave him to me." Indeed, the wounded soldier was raving. I dare say that if he recovered he would have been one of those who would have cut their tongues out sooner than use a coarse or ungainly word while his guardian angel was by, and who would rise in his bed as the Lady with the Lamp glided from ward to ward, to kiss her shadow as it floated o'er his couch. What were curses and revilings in her reckoning? The woman's ears were deaf to everything but the command to do good. Her eyes were blind to everything save the spectacle of suffering humanity before her; but eyes and ears shall be opened some day to hear a gracious commendation, and see a glorious reward, when you and I, and all the world, the evil and the just, the prevailing tyrant and the oppressed party, shall all appear and receive our symbol.

My dear, you live in the midst of peace and comfort. A quiet round of daily duties is your portion; untroubled by cares or sorrows, it is yours to indulge in harmless and cheerful relaxation. You are called upon to make no great sacrifices, to participate in no great afflictions, to console or assuage no great woes. It is because, while I wish you to be as pretty and engaging and fascinating and merry as nature and competence happily permit you to be; while I would have you girt and fenced about by all due barriers of gentle, staid, and decorous maidenhood, I would still have you remember that in the most refined woman's life there may come stern and terrible actualities; that the proprieties of gentility

and demure behaviour must sometimes be quite overthrown and cast on one side in the performance of your duty towards God and your neighbour. Be, then, well behaved, so far as modesty, humility, cheerful good nature, ready kindness, hatred of meanness and vulgarity go to make the best of good behaviour; but don't let your too keen sense of the petty proprieties of life allow you to ignore the great and cruel truths by which you are surrounded. Don't be a hypocrite to yourself, and think that existence is one round of frivolity, and urbane tittle-tattle, and punctilious etiquette. Don't let your heart wear gloves. Don't think you have fulfilled all the requirements of politeness when you leave a card on your conscience. Call upon conscience. Insist upon seeing her. Rout her up if she says she is not at home. Keep your veil down when you fancy gentlemen are watching you, as you survey life; but look at it with your veil up when alone. Try and understand the duties, the perils of your sex. Consider your sister who is in low or vile estate. Find out how poor women live; how they manage their husbands and children. Study the realities. Don't lecture about them at social science congresses, but lock each Truth up in your heart of hearts, to be made use of in action when the time comes. And it may come—a time of trial and a time of tribulation—even while you are trying on six-and-a-half gloves at Houbigant's, or inspecting Irish poplins at Waterloo House. Adieu. *A bientôt.*

CONSTANCE CHESTERFIELD.

LETTER THE NINTH.

MISS CHESTERFIELD HAS BEEN TO PARIS.

How infinitely kind of Lady Coseymore! How I love her for adding, as she has done, to the happiness and amusement of my beloved Louisa! Not that Amelia-Charlotte de Fytchett should be excluded from a share in my thanks. But gratitude, my dear, like most impulsive qualities, is partial and one-sided. I am afraid King Charles the Second was in too great a hurry to be grateful to General Monk, who had given him back his crown, and too eager to reward him with the Dukedom of Albemarle to have much leisure for even common gratitude towards the Pendrells, who had saved him from the block when he was fain to abide in the oak, or towards the hundreds of gallant cavaliers who had perilled their lives and spent their fortunes in his cause. Let me take this fine historic example, and, profiting by it, strive for once to be just as well as generous in my gratitude. Thank you, Amelia-Charlotte. Kiss her for me, darling, and tell her how fully I appreciate her efforts to cast sunshine on your life. Sure nothing could have been better managed; and the plot of your little drama of pleasure has been as skilfully constructed as successfully worked out. Mrs. de Fytchett had been deprived, through Mr. de Fytchett's gout, of her annual autumnal holiday tour: say up the Rhine or to Hombourg-les-Bains, or to the Western Highlands, or— sweet pilgrimage, endeared to me by ineffaceable memories

of happy days!—to the lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland. She, weary of London, would have made a descent on Brighton or Scarborough, Harrogate or Ventnor, or the soft and emollient Torquay; nay, she might perchance have condescended to visit the crabbed *passée* old woman on her sofa at Pumpwell, at the fall of the year; but that dreadful influenza supervened, and, ovewhelmed by floods of farinaceous food and sweet spirits of nitre, she was again compelled to abandon her trip. But Amelia-Charlotte, an energetic woman—some people, I am not among the number, call her obstinate—was not to be balked of her plans of enjoyment. With the New Year she put into execution a plan long conceived of taking the imperial city of Paris by storm. She tore Mr. de Fytchett away from his department at the Royal Rabbit Warrens Office—it is true the Hereditary Grand Hareskin seller, who looks in once a quarter to draw his salary, told him that he was working himself to death (the Ostend correspondence is enormous), and that he ought positively to take a month's extra leave. She reminded him of a long-standing promise. She incited him to drive to his bankers, Messrs. Doublon and Moydor, Fleet Street, and procure, through the intermediary of that firm, the requisite Foreign Office passports; and in the bleakest, frigidest of December weather she carried him, per Dover Mail train and packet steamer, and Great Northern Railway of France, to that delightful capital which these old eyes have not seen for twenty long years. Of course you were to go. Is there any rational pleasure on foot of which my Louisa was not to partake? Frederica was to go and renew her reminiscences of Madame de Vergenne's *Pensionnat de demoiselles*, like Count Rodolpho in the Somnambula. Pincott even had a corner in a passport, and was to accompany the party with other female domesticities, for we are a polite and genteel

nation, and always travel with our ladies' maids, our medicine chests, and our neatly-bound Body of Controversial Theology. All was ready for the journey, when what did that dear, kind, thoughtful Lady Coseymore do, than write post haste to say that during *your* sojourn in Paris, she insisted on your sharing the hospitality of her splendid mansion in the Avenue Marigny. She was too old and affectionate a friend of your mamma, Lady Coseymore said, to be denied; and while you stayed in Paris she would be proud to occupy, with Amelia-Charlotte, a joint guardianship over Sir Charles Chesterfield's orphan. Need I say that with my concurrence, per electric telegraph—fancy saying "certainly" by a flash of lightning—the generous offer was gratefully accepted, and that, while the De Fytchetts occupied a sumptuous and costly suite of apartments at the Hôtel du Louvre—Mr. de F. is high up in the office without his private means and A. C.'s pin money, and can afford it—my darling was lodged at my Lady Coseymore's snug and handsome caravanserai in the Avenue Marigny, Champs Elysées. The De Fytchetts, on their part, were not sorry. My old acquaintance with the Coseymores gave them, through you, a *pied à terre* in higher circles than, genteel as they are, they can aspire to in London; and so a dream almost of the Arabian Nights has been realised, and my Louisa has spent a fortnight in Paris with the kindest hostess in the world—a superb old lady of the grand old school she should be by this time, and has mixed, moreover, with the very best society, both native and foreign, to be found in the gay and cosmopolitan metropolis of France. The daughter of a princess might be proud to be sheltered under the roof of such a lady as my old friend. Honoria Baroness Coseymore goes everywhere. She is a Peeress in her own right; witness her coroneted lozenges, and supporters, and motto, "*Il est mien.*" Her husband,

General Baron Coseymore, G.C.B., died covered with wounds, British and foreign orders of knighthood, and corn-plasters. He was one of the bravest officers that fought in the Peninsular war under the immortal Wellington, and was a martyr to bunions. He was immensely rich—mainly, it was whispered, through despoils of Spanish convents—was a great musical amateur and patron of art, and was one of the rudest and coarsest old men I ever met with. *His* peerage is extinct, and the Baroness got the creation in her lifetime as a reward for something that Coseymore did for his party. She prefers living in Paris, on her ample jointure, to vegetating in London. She sees everybody—Buonapartists, Legitimists, Orleanists, Republicans, Diplomatists, Yankees, Muscovites, and Mussulmen. I believe that her maiden name was Maltworm, and that her grandfather brewed table ale on Bow Common.

One little thorn just seems to peer from your bouquet of Parisian roses—one little doubt perplexes me. Must it not have been by one of the very oddest of coincidences that, at the very moment that Paris trip was arranged, Ferdinand de Fytchett should have obtained six weeks' leave of absence from his regiment, and that of all people in the world Mr. Reginald Tapeleigh, who had postponed *his* autumnal leave also, should have elected to disport his elegant person in Paris, and in the company of Ferdinand, of whom that amiable young gentleman is now a great crony? Three times over you tell me in your last that Reginald is *not* wild, that he never plays or stops out late like the dreadful guardsmen, and that you have never seen his eyes inflamed or his face unseasonably pale. I only know that Ferdinand de Fytchett is very much libelled if he be not one of the wildest young men extant—and he is not in the Guards either. I have heard, Miss, of his debts and his doings at barracks; his debts and

his dinners at Richmond and Greenwich; his cigars at three guineas a pound, and his many tailors. In my time a red coat was sufficient for a soldier; now our young officers seem to take every opportunity, by their costume, of assuring the world that they are not in the least connected with the army; whereas, by one of the curious contradictions of human nature, the civilians take every possible pains to induce the belief that they are military. Let Mr. Ferdinand de Fytchett take care; else will his Royal Highness commanding-in-chief take away his commission, and his papa cut him off with a shilling. After all, I believe Ferdinand is a good lad, but he *is* wild; and if your admired Mr. Reginald Tapeleigh be truly as you maintain, as decorous as Telemachus, Mr. Ferdinand is, at the least, a very dangerous Mentor for that well-behaved youth. The young men, you say, did not stay at the Hôtel du Louvre. They declared it to be dear and uncomfortable, and "hung out"—to use their unpolished language—how rude and overbearing the young men of the present day are!—at an hotel called Lille et Albion, in the Rue St. Honoré. The last time I was in Paris with Sir Charles, A.D. 1839, we stopped at Meurice's. Everybody stopped at Meurice's then, or else at the Windsor or the Wagram. Those Hotels have gone out of fashion now, I suppose, like your mamma. I hope the De Fytchetts found their suite of rooms *au premier*, for which you inform me they paid forty francs a day, without candles or firing—large enough.

Did you find Paris much changed? Bah! I am talking to a little girl. You had never been there before. Frederica, you say, found it much altered. I dare say she did; from the time when she and Madame de Vergenne's pupils walked two and two in the Champs Elysées, and were put *en pénitence* on their return to the *pension*, for turning their heads to look at

the dancing dogs, and the Théâtre Guignol. Dear, delightful Champs Elysées: with all the changes the present Ruler has worked in Paris, railroad tracks for omnibuses, vast boulevards pierced through crowded quarters, new palaces, new quays, huge barracks, Regent's Park-like villas in the suburbs, electric telegraphs, macadam and other innovations, I am weary of reading of—yea, even to Halles Centrales, the Louvre finished, the Sainte Chapelle restored, and that wonderful Bois de Boulogne and Pré Catelan—he cannot take away the distinguishing signs, the imperishable characteristics of the Champs Elysées and the Boulevards. To the end of the chapter there will be, I predict, in the one, circuses, dioramas, puppet shows, *cafés chantants* and beerhouses *al fresco*, Polichinelle, the dancing dogs, the Guignol, quacks, conjurors, little children in goat carriages, nursemaids ogled by bearded *sapeurs*, little boy soldiers with gaby faces, trousers too tight for them, and smoking nasty cheap cigars, the fumes of which impregnate and poison the air. There will be corseted and strapped-up dandies bowing and grimacing to the ladies in their carriages on the drive, or who have alighted from those vehicles to sweep the smooth paths with their vast rich skirts. There will be other dandies on horseback vainly endeavouring to ride like Englishmen, and, in their timorous yet frenzied gesticulations and tenacity, looking much more like baboons astride. There will always be the same lumbering yellow omnibuses, *fiacres*, *citadines*, and cabriolets, with the raw-boned, ill-groomed, club-tailed horses, the same washer-women's carts toiling towards Neuilly or Boulogne, the same trotting gendarmes, and cantering *maquignons* in blouses from the adjoining livery stables, showing off spavined screws to wittols who imagine themselves judges of horse-flesh. Always beneath the trees, too, the same boys and girls' schools softly pacing two and two, guarded by stern *pions* and sub-govern-

esses. The same stealthy priests in cassock, bands, buck shoes, and shovel hats, prowling on the skirts of the gay promenade, pretending to con their breviaries, but, it always seemed to me, surveying nurserymaids and soldiers and children and mountebanks, even to the dancing dogs, with evil eyes. Times change, costumes change, details of manners change, but I am sure, my Louisa, that the crowd you saw but one short week ago was, to all intents and purposes, the same brilliant assemblage I have so often surveyed; the same which, in wigs and hoops and swords and laced coats, made the Champs Elysées charming a hundred years ago. Always, too, must there have been the same prattling, grinning, nodding and beckoning, and shoulder-shrugging hilarity in that unrivalled and sempiternal multitude, straining their best energies to the task of doing nothing with ease, grace, and cheerfulness. Always must there have been the same glorious blessed sunset at the end of that grand vista. *You* saw the sun sink below the horizon through the magnificent archway of the Etoile. The arch was not half finished when I first beheld Paris.

For I was a bit of a school-girl, fifteen years old indeed, just emancipated from Miss Grummidge's finishing academy in Old Brompton, and my papa and mamma took advantage of the great peace of 1815, when the ambition of Buonaparte was so fearfully punished, and the valour of the British army, commanded by his Grace the Duke of Wellington, so triumphantly asserted. We had just as happy a party as you had lately: and perhaps the very merriest of our party was the poor old Marquis Aillerdest Pigeon, who had been glad enough for years to impart to us girls, and for so much a quarter, the finishing touches in French conversation and accent. He was to get back his large estates now, dear old gentleman, with his nice powdered head and little bobbing

pigtail. His beloved Monarch was restored, and as he pinned his cross of St. Louis once more on the breast of his snuff-coloured spencer, he said that the *ancien régime* was to be restored too, and that the Great Waters that had overflowed were to be turned back once more into their narrow channel. Poor old Marquis! He found a wholesale grocer in quiet possession of his estates, and I believe he never got an acre of his broadlands back. He died in Louis Philippe's time, a poor pensioner on the old Civil List, but hopeful and believing to the last that the Great Waters would be turned back into the narrow channel. At the peace of 1815, his name and his misfortunes gave him a sort of temporary celebrity, and he went to court, to the Tuileries, and St. Cloud. Little did we Brompton school-girls imagine, when we teased the snuffy, chatty old gentleman, who taught us our conjugations, and when we hung paper addenda to his pigtail, that he possessed one of the noblest and most famous names of France—that his ancestors had fought in the Crusades, and that he himself, in the days of Louis the Well-beloved, had been deigned worthy to *monter dans les carrosses du roi*—to ride in the carriage of the most Christian King.

Well, it was the year 1815, and we enjoyed ourselves very much. We went to see a droll farce called "*Les Anglaises pour rire*," in which a M. Vernet was very amusing, and the dress and conversation of the hated English—they loathed us then, my dear, as they do now—were extravagantly but ludicrously caricatured. We saw the horses of St. Mark taken down from the triumphal arch of the Carrousel, and carted through the streets by Austrian soldiers on their way back to Venice, the French standing by, grinding their teeth and cursing in an impotent manner. We saw the streets and Boulevards thronged with Cossacks, Kirghese, Croats, Czecks, Magyars, Prussian and Austrian

soldiers, staring at the gorgeous shop windows, and pulling and handling, with a brute curiosity, the rich stuffs that hung at the door-jambs. We saw foreign sentries at the doors, and foreign flags flying on the roofs of the stately public edifices erected by that wonderful Napoleon. We walked in the Palais Royal, and saw the Russian officers, who seemed almost to live there, crowding the galleries, encumbering the cafés, swaggering in and out of the gaming houses —one could hear, walking in the vestibules, the ring and chink of the gold coin in the saloons above—and drinking champagne at ten o'clock in the morning. We went to the Barrière du Combat, and saw a poor broken-down donkey baited, and at last almost torn to pieces by savage dogs;— how I cried! and papa said it was not half so cruel as a cock-fight. We saw the fat, infirm old king being wheeled about in a chair in front of the Pavillon de l'Horloge at the Tuileries; and in the grand gardens of the palace papa pointed out Madame de Staël and Madame Récamier, Benjamin Constant, Marshal Soult, M. Dénon (who knew so much about Egypt), and innumerable other celebrities. We heard a lecture on Optics at the Institute, and saw the Allied Sovereigns and the Hetman Platoff at the Grand Opera. And last of all, my dear, we saw the Champs Elysées, not as yet in all their glory, for the Arc de l'Etoile, commenced by Buonaparte in glorified vaunting of his victories, was not terminated. But there was the same sparkling crowd, the same perpetual fair, with one strange menacing addition which I saw, but which will not, I should think, be seen again on this side the century. All the upper portion of the Champs Elysées, and far up the Route de Neuilly, was occupied by lines of bell-shaped tents, glinting sharp and white among the richly-tinted autumnal foliage of the trees. Mars had set up his shield and spear in these Elysian fields. There was a great

camp of armed men—hostile to the French, more hostile to Buonaparte—there. Lying under the trees, piling their bayonets on the scant patches of sward, clustering around camp-kettles, wrangling with sutlers and baggage-wagon women, gravely patrolling on sentry, or lounging at the openings of tents with pipes in their mouths, were thousands of our own-red-coats. Yes, my dear, our own soldiers! the gallant warriors of the famous British army! Yes! and I saw the chubby English drummer boys doing their tiny ratatoo, and the Highlanders, plumed and kilted, marching to the pibroch's sound, shoulder to shoulder, to parade; and descending the Champs Elysées again, we saw, mixed up with the nursemaids, and the dandies, and the mountebanks, the bearskins of the British grenadiers, and the high-crowned shakos of the Line, and jolly dragoons blustering by with their long swords trailing over the gravel, and knots of English officers walking with that calm, self-satisfied air of good-humoured insolence and contemptuous patronage, which has not deserted our countrymen to this day, and looking as though everything on the continent of Europe, from battles and sieges to mountebanks' feats and quack doctors' orations, were gotten up for their especial amusement and gratification. Sincerely do I hope that, for the sake of the world's peace, such another foreign occupation and humiliation of Paris may not take place; but whenever Shanko Fanko reads to me from the newspapers—Siphkins can't master politics, and I, therefore, limit her to novel reading—that the French have been particularly saucy, and that the Gallic cock is crowing very loudly, I always feel inclined to ask them: "When did your regimental bands play, and your officers troop your guard in Hyde Park? Ours have done so in your Elysian Fields." It is invidious and unchristian, no doubt, to remind our neighbours of the times they were in

difficulties; but blood is thicker than water, and we must give them a bit of our minds now and then.

Your ecstasies at the Boulevards afford me unfeigned gratification. There is a renewal of the pleasure I once experienced myself at the sight of those unequalled thoroughfares, in your delight at them. The Neapolitans tell us to see Naples, and then die; the Spaniards make the braggadocio vaunt, that those who have not seen Seville have not seen a marvel; nay, the sprightly inhabitants of Eblana declare that he is only half a man who has not sailed on the beautiful bosom of Dublin Bay, and acknowledged the magic presence of "Ireland's eye." But I am certain that the tourist's education is defective, his mind not half matured, his very existence incomplete, who has not wandered on the Boulevards of Paris. The great Lexicographer and author of Rasselas tells us, that a writer who wishes to excel in English composition "must devote his days and his nights to the study of Addison." Be this as it may, no one can hope to obtain a competent knowledge of human nature who has not, at some period of his life, devoted portions of his days and his nights to the study of the Boulevards. You meet everybody there, from the Prime Minister to the rag-picker; from the Prince of the blood to the little *grisette;* from the Marshal of France to the prowling Police spy.

Wonderful Boulevards with their eight-storied houses, in each of which eight hundred branches of commercial, artistic, literary, speculative, or swindling industry seem to be carried on; with the multitudinous *cafés*, in front of which, in the very coldest of weather, people will persist in sitting, puffing cigarettes, and sipping their *demie-tasses* and glasses of sugar and water—did you see any, during your fortnight's sojourn?—I mean those defiant *flâneurs* who *will* patronise those little exterior marble tables, and cane-bottomed chairs, in

spite of the fallen fortunes of the mercury in the thermometer? Then the innumerable *passages*, each one a little bezesteen of art-nicknackery in itself; crowded avenues of frivolous good taste, replete with tasteful toys and useless *brimborions*. Then the enormous roadway, with its quadruple line of carriages, carts, and equestrians; the little glass pagodas stuck over with advertisements on their transparent panels, and within whose recesses lurk snuffy old women, with red pocket handkerchiefs tied round their heads, selling cheap periodicals and *journaux du soir*. I take your description for this, my darling, for these glass pagodas are not within my Paris ken. At all events, they seem to serve some useful purpose, these pagodas—quite in contradistinction to the queer ugly structures about which the *Times*, and the *Telegraph*, and *Punch* have been making such a fuss, and at which the Duke of Wellington—not the one who gained the victories, my dear, but his son—was so angry.

I see the Boulevards once more. The long lines of branching trees, the verandahs and gay balconies, the coloured lamps before the *cafés*, and staring play bill placards; the squadrons of lancers trotting through the crowds of carriages, their red pennons fluttering in the breeze; the recruits in blouses, and their hats stuck over with papers and ribbon streamers; the nurses in high Normandy caps, parading their little gourd-bonneted charges in go-carts and leading strings, or sitting with them outside the Café de Paris; the tremendous dandies on the steps of Tortoni's, twisting their waxed moustaches, twirling their jewelled canes, or trifling with the trinkets at their watchguards. I see the florists' shops on the Place de la Madeleine, and at the entrance of the Passage de l'Opéra, where you may give fifteen francs for a bouquet of violets, and a louis-d'or for a bunch of camellias. I see the two pedlars shrieking their encomiums of sham

watches and chains at twenty-five sous a piece; the wonderful stalls stuck up against dead walls—for there used to be dead walls even on the Boulevards—and displaying books, engravings, carpet slippers, razors, combs, scented soap, rosaries and scapularies, hair-brushes, pocket mirrors, riding whips, sweetmeats, chocolate, braces, tobacco-pipes, gloves, garters, glasses for catching larks, powder-flasks and shot-belts, breviaries, workboxes, tin mugs, and embroidered smoking caps. Ah! come again, ye happy times; days of mirth and pleasure, days of youthful curiosity and excitement. Come again, O Boulevards of Paris! They cannot come back. These scenes return no more to me; and on my sofa pillow drops a tear, not very bitter, but still very, very sad, as the bright vision fades away, and I find myself in the dreary old drawing-room at Pumpwell; Siphkins mousling over the last novel; Shanko Fanko gaping, as he hunts through the columns of the *Times* for an advertisement I want; and Lampkin boring me in his meek manner for contributions in flannel to the Old Woman's Perennial Petticoat Society. Good, tedious man, my thoughts are hundreds of miles away.

Don't think I gained all my knowledge of the Boulevards from the visit I paid to Paris with my papa and mamma in the Waterloo year. Sir Charles and I were in Paris in 1839. Though my dear husband hated the French for their tyranny and rapacity, and Jacobinism, and that, and to the day of his death believed that the sons of Gaul lived upon fricasseed frogs and snail soup, and were all born dancing masters, he respected his wife's liking for the gay capital of France, and was good enough to partake, with much apparent pleasure, of the varied amusements of Paris when he and I made the visit together. Many and many a time have we sat in the cosy little private boxes in the dear little Boulevard theatres.

Many and many a time has my dear good man treated me to a *recherché* dinner at Verrey's, or the Trois Frères, or the Rocher de Cancale: the grand Dîners de Paris and Table-d'hôtes of the Hôtel du Louvre were not in being then. Many a time have I heard Sir Charles declare that the French were deprived by Providence of the possession of beef steaks, of the ability to cook them, and of the faculty to enjoy them. Finally, many and many a Lyons silk dress from the Rue St. Denis, a lace shawl from the Rue de la Paix, a jewelled coiffure, a marabout turban, a primrose-covered bonnet has my kind partner purchased for me in the Palais Royal or the Rue Vivienne. 'Twas only in the article of French schools that Sir Charles was inflexible. "My Looey shall never go to one of those hothouses for breaking the Commandments," he declared, and I obeyed him.

You, my Louisa, were whisked, so to speak, by what is generally advertised as the eleven hours' route; that is to say, you reached Paris in something like thirteen hours after your departure from London. An express mail train rattled you from Babylon Bridge to a landing stage in Dover harbour, whence you were embarked with as much celerity and scarcely more ceremony—I quote your own description—than the leathern mail bags which accompanied you, on board an express mail steamer, which panted and throbbed with you, and, in defiance of wind and weather, landed you on the long, gaunt, Calais pier. You had just time to swallow some excellent soup, eat the wing of a chicken, and drink a glass of claret; have your passport examined, and your name mispronounced as "Sesterfeele," and watch the animated controversies with commissionnaires and money-changers of Mr. de Fychett's polyglot valet, Michalski—he says that he is a Tyrolese, but I think, from your description of his acquirements as a linguist, that he must be an Irishman, whose

ancestor carried a hod at the building of the Tower of Babel —who travels with you as courier, when you were introduced to a comfortable first-class carriage, well lighted, well warmed, and well carpeted, and rattled off again at express speed, as the French understand it, to Paris. Very different were the means by which Sir Charles and I were wont to reach the metropolis of the *grande nation*. In '15 my papa and mamma travelled in their own carriage, and hired post-horses from stage to stage. In '39 we went in the *coupé* of the diligence, a lumbering old institution dragged by six horses with rope harness. We started from Calais at eight o'clock on a Tuesday morning, and reached Paris at noon on Wednesday! And that was considered a vast acceleration of the usual rate of travelling.

I shall wait with impatience for your promised account of my Lady Coseymore's grand new year ball. You say that Reginald Tapeleigh danced with a Russian princess, and that you waltzed with two ambassadors. What have I or you to do with Mr. Reginald Tapeleigh's saltatory performances? 'Tis only your partners who interest me. Stay, I find that at a later period of the evening, or rather at an earlier hour in the morning—indiscreet child!—you also danced with Reginald. I shall expect full particulars, and have written to Lady Coseymore for additional and confirmatory evidence. Heaven keep you!

CONSTANTIA CHESTERFIELD.

LETTER THE TENTH.

ON THE ART OF DANCING, AND ON BALLS, PARTIES, AND OTHER JUNKETINGS.

HAS my Louisa been bitten by a tarantula spider? The inference would certainly seem to be borne out, for, to take the evidence of her last three letters to me, she has never left off dancing since Christmas. Everything has been "up the middle and down again; cross, poussette, courtesy to partners." Ah! I forget that these are very old-world figures —choregraphic items that would be disdained by the young maidens of the present generation. The schoolmistress has been abroad as to dancing, as to all else; and goodness and modern science only know what elaborate fanteagues are now performed in the "Ladies' Colleges" and "Educational Institutes" which take the place of the old-fashioned places once called "schools." And yet I have heard that antiquated dances sometimes come into vogue again. Isn't there one called the "Lancers?" Was it not performed with brilliant *éclat* at kind Lady Coseymore's New Year's Fête? Isn't it, or wasn't it a few months since at least, as fashionable and *distinguée* as a bunch of wheat-ears in the bonnet, sable-and-or ribbons, seal-skin mantles, or gloves of mauve plush? *Après nous, le déluge.* Mr. Shillibeer, I am informed, will furnish mauve coffins and *glacé* shrouds for the quality, if desired. I think I can remember these same "Lancers"

ever so many years ago—in the days when the "Tenth didn't dance," and wore gold-lace straps to their pantaloons.

What has become of the Tenth, their gold straps, their worn-out swallow tails with the big epaulettes, and their dandified perfumers' airs? Some of the officers ride over from Stableford, where there is always a cavalry regiment in garrison, to Pumpwell. One or two are brought to lunch occasionally, and with wonder I regard their altered appearance. The Tenth have been to the wars. They have come home with beards and spatterdashes, and medals, and faces bronzed and scarred. Captain Bayard wears the cross of the Legion of Honour—a decoration for even thinking of which a member of the Tenth (or the Eleventh, or the Onetyonth) would have been blackballed, or expelled the mess, or cashiered, or done something dreadful to, years ago. They would be ashamed of their former millefleurs and carpet-knight ways now—these stern, business-like troopers. Even the young cornets, not yet emancipated from the riding-school and the troop sergeant-major, affect a practical, rough-and-ready demeanour. The cornets have to pass an examination now, my dear, before they can get their commission. When your mamma was young, children's names used to be "down at the Horse Guards" for a "pair of colours" from their very first birthday; and infants in arms were often ensigns. It has been found essential, in this present era of advanced civilisation, that to kill people properly a lad should have an intimate acquaintance with French and the mathematics. Let us trust that the time is approaching when, the morning before a battle, the sergeants will go round and duly ascertain that every private has been vaccinated, and has the Church Catechism in his knapsack.

Meantime the "Lancers" have come back to us as a fashionable dance I have been so long out of the world that I may be well excused for asking what you dance at present

besides these same "Lancers." We—they I mean—have been wild about the resuscitated dance at Pumpwell lately. Fanny Merrylegs was here yesterday—provoking little thing! —and for five-and-twenty minutes talked of nothing else. It must be admitted, nevertheless, that what was fashionable as Pumpwell yesterday may have been *rococo* in London the day before. So—what else, and else, in the dancing world? Is the famous Polka extinct? I well remember when it first took the town by storm, about sixteen years since. A species of teetotum Cracovienne at first; its performance confined to the stage; its complicated figures executed by a gentleman in a polygonal cap, a braided surtout, Hessians and tassels, and a lady likewise brave in braiding on her jacket and short cap, and otherwise accoutred in a lancer's shako, and boots with fur round the tops. Both dancers, at to their heels, were shod with brass; and their *talons* gave a pleasant clinking sound. The Polka, which drove people for some months delightfully mad, had been invented, it was said, by a "Bohemian nobleman." Who was he? When—why did he invent it? Was he driven to such an act by the tyranny of the Austrian Government over his unhappy country? Was the Polka originally a war dance, performed at the battle of Prague? Bohemia, it must be remembered, is, in dancing-masters' geography, a district situate somewhere between Warsaw and Cracow, bounded by Andalusia and the Neapolitan seaboard, and adjacent to the country of the Wilis, the Almè, the Zingari, and the Bayaderes. What does it matter so long as there is a pretty step, and a gay tune to dance to? Hasn't the greatest of dramatists told us of the seacoast of a country not far from Bohemia, and where there is no seacoast at all? At all events the Polka took a very firm root in this country, and from it sprang an infinity of ramifications: Schottisches—the

Highland Fling Bohemianised, I suppose — Cracoviennes, Warsoviennes, Mazourkas, Redowas, and the like. The very Waltz, imported about the time of the battle of Waterloo, came out in duplicate, and was the *valse à deux temps*. When that graceful and captivating dance first made its appearance it was pronounced highly improper. That grave censor of manners and bright exemplar of morality, my Lord Byron, was severely satirical upon the simple-minded, affectionate German exotic. People of old English prejudices, partisans of hard-working, romping gymnastics, such as Country Dances, and " Sir Roger de Coverley," were scandalised at the intertwinings and gentle embracings of the Waltz; although I dare say the Country Dances and the Sir Roger de Coverleys were both introduced from abroad, and were thought decidedly improper on their first acclimation among us. I should very much like to know, daughter of mine, what has not been pronounced in its time " improper " by the gabies and the thick-heads. These Letters, even, have been declared to be tainted with impropriety.

I was not in my youth a very great dancer. Perhaps I may have preferred gossiping—talking scandal if you will—and the Waltz, whose coming in was coeval with my " coming out," may have had something to do with my distaste for dancing. In the grave, courteous figures of a Quadrille it is easy enough to converse, to say pretty or ugly things, to speak good or evil of your neighbours as you choose. You may stab a rival's reputation, or cast slow and disdainful glances at an unfaithful rival as you stalk past, or make grave reverences to them. So, too, with the Menuet de la Cour. I have often thought the elaborate poses and complicated gestures necessary to the efficient performance of that most aristocratic dance eminently favourable to the composition of stinging epigrams, or the interchange of high-flown

compliments. You can *think* as you dance a Quadrille or a Menuet; but what mental process can be resorted to amidst the spinnings and whirlings of all these wild Waltzes, Polkas, Schottisches, Redowas, and the like? Surely one has enough to occupy the mind in endeavouring to keep time and step, and to avoid tumbling down. What can you say to your partner beyond a panting "slower," or "faster, if you please?" Whether young ladies can find time, or have the inclination, to beg their cavaliers not to squeeze them quite so tightly, I don't know; but from the coloured lithographs on the dance music I see, I am inclined to think that much room exists for the delicate remonstrance at which I have hinted. Gentlemen put their arms certainly about their partners' waists in my old dancing days; at least, the hand and coat-cuff hovered somewhere in the mystic region where the ladies' waist was supposed to be; but if the coloured lithographs are to be trusted—and I hope they are not, my dear—the hugging of bears, and the pawings of monkeys, are as nothing compared with the Terpsichorean embraces of the present day.

After all, are we, or am I, to set up rules and canons—to draw the exact lines of demarcation between the decorous and the indecorous, in the indulgence of this astonishing and incomprehensible amusement; utterly destitute as it is—in its western phase, at least—of sense or meaning; essentially frivolous, exceedingly fatiguing, and quite void of any results beyond clamour and heat, and yet delighted in by the wisest as well as the most foolish of man and womankind? I have heard people say that it is beneath a man's dignity to dance well; and many modern dandies seem to endorse the opinion by dancing in as lazy and slovenly a manner as possible. Again, a notable wiseacre of my acquaintance declares that he never sees an accomplished male dancer—not professional, *bien entendu*—without thinking of the vast amount of

time the man must have lost; time that might have been advantageously devoted to some more rational and useful pursuit. But there is much of the vanity of that sham wisdom, which is a thousand times worse than candid folly, in all these opinions and assertions. I grant that very brainless puppies of men, and silly bits of girls, are often exquisitely beautiful dancers. I know a born idiot—a perfect *crétin*, a *ganache*, a "natural"—who dances with the grace of Parisot and the agility of Armand Vestris. And, *per contrâ*, there is the Honourable Mrs. Golightly, painter, poetess, musician—a woman who is full of soul to the roots of her hair and the tips of her fingers, and who in society used to be called the "White Elephant;" for she was very fair, and her performances in the ball-room very much resembled the uncouth gambols one might expect from the animals sacred to Siam.

The gift of dancing goes by favour. Some are born with it as with a caul; and, ere now, the lightness of men's heels has saved their heads. Yes; people are born to dance well, and some to dance not at all. See, at a boarding-school, or at Madame Bizet Michau's academy, how little Minnie Cherrytoes will caper like a small sylph, from her earliest days of pinafore and trouserhood. She seems to know all the new dances by intuition. She skips, and winds, and bounds about, to the delight of the dancing-mistress, and the applause—almost unmingled with envy—of her comrades. See, at the other end of the class, that unhappy, gawky Miss Leadbitter. She is the best French scholar in the school. Minnie can't approach her in drawing, in ciphering, in the use of the globes; but you *can't* teach her to dance. With about equal ease could you instruct her in the art of walking barefoot over red-hot ploughshares. Agonies have been suffered by this devoted

scholar, in the stocks, with back-boards, dumb-bells, Indian sceptres, and other implements of calisthenic torture. By methods almost as rude as those employed by mountebanks to teach a poodle destined for the stage, Miss Leadbitter's instructors have striven to make a graceful dancer of her. But all in vain. It wasn't in her; and it never will be in her, were you to drum and drill the elements of the poetry of motion into her poor dull perception till doomsday.

Am I but describing myself under the pseudonym of Leadbitter, you may ask? Nay, not altogether. I was never a great dancer, as I have told you, and scarcely a moderately graceful one. I used to think when I danced—and which surely showed that I had no occasion for the art—I was always glad when the set was terminated. I have skipped and ambled through some thousands of Quadrilles, I suppose, but in Waltzing I was never a proficient, nor of it was I ever a votary. It made me giddy; it made me hot; it gave me palpitation at the heart, and took away my appetite for supper; and, to this day, I can't help thinking that the Waltz is, as a dance, thoroughly unsuited to our sober-sided England, and should be indulged in only by the volatile and light-hearted nations of the south; unless, indeed, it was invented by that ingeniously philosophical nation the Germans, as a relief to the dryness of their favourite metaphysical studies, and as a means, by rapid evolution, of clearing their heads from the accumulated nicotian vapours proceeding from their meerschaums.

But what good is there in my counselling you one way or another as to the dances you are to dance, or how you are to dance them, or how often, or when, or where? Obedient in most things, my Louisa will, in this one, I conclude, claim her prerogative as a woman, and consult only her own sweet

will and the exigencies of the fashion. 'Tis quite a *Lex non scripta*, and one impossible to be codified, that regulates, or rather fails to regulate, the infinite varieties of that same fashion. The vulgar dance of to-day may be the aristocratic *pas* of to-morrow. Reels, jigs, flings, clog-hornpipes, may have wonderful names given to them, and be danced with immense applause in the saloons of Belgravia, when their original and genuine habitat may be the gipsy's camp or the village ale-house. What was it that Herodias danced when she so captivated the King of Galilee? It may have been a jig. It may have been such a *pas seul* as Miss Lydia Thompson executes in "Magic Toys" to the huge delectation of the sixpenny gallery. It may have been such a sensual saraband as the bangled and painted nautch-girls of India, or the be-kohled and be-henna'd Ghawazie of Egypt lounge through, now, to the music of tom-toms and fifes before some Bengal baboo, or some *blasé* Pacha. How do we know, any more than we do of that awfully mysterious gambado which the Jewish king performed before the ark? Yet we must be certain, that as Herodias lived in the very best society, it was of the most fashionable Galilean dance of the period that Herodias must have been the executant.

Set down no dances as purely ridiculous. At one time — thousands of years ago, perhaps — they may have formed the delight of kings, and priests, and lawgivers. The sages of the Athenian Areopagus, or the magicians of old Egypt, may have joined in dances almost identical to those slow and solemn or grotesque measures paced through round about the great hall fires by the judges and benchers of our old inns of court at Christmas and Shrovetide; and these, again, from the descriptions handed down to us by antiquaries, may have been the self-same dances as

"my lord" and "my lady," and the clowns, and paper-bedizened boys, the whole confraternity of transmogrified sweeps, indeed, were in the habit, until lately, of going through on May Day. Everybody has heard of Sir Christopher Hatton, Queen Elizabeth's "dancing chancellor;" yet everybody does not know that Sir Christopher was wont to dance in his inn hall very much after the fashion of Jack in the Green. Nor was the "dancing chancellor" isolated as an instance of choregraphy combined with Coke upon Lyttleton. Coke himself, Selden, the mighty Francis Bacon, Baron Verulam, and Viscount St. Alban's—the "greatest, wisest, meanest of mankind"—all the great magnates and pundits of the law were wont to dance in public at the appointed seasons. The quaint custom began to decline about Sir Matthew Hale's time. The grim Cromwellian commonwealth, indeed, gave the death blow to many customs as quaint and even more jovial; but dancing, by judges and benchers, lingered until very nearly the Revolution days. There is a legend that even the ferocious Jefferies was once so seen dancing in the hall. Perhaps it was a maniac that saw him. William the Dutchman was no dancer, and his countrymen and countrywomen wore too many pairs of galligaskins and linsey-woolsey petticoats to be very expert in the *gracieuse science*, although in some of Tenier's and Ostade's pictures you may see the heavy boors and booresses getting up some clumsy capers, the exhilaration of which is due more, I think, to the strength of the schnapps they have been drinking than to the lightness of the performers' limbs. Judges don't dance now-a-days, though, curiously, as I have heard, at the *lust hausen* of Amsterdam and the Hague, the Dutch do. Fashion, you see, has changed, and crossed the Zuyderzee. The Polka, or, as it is there pronounced, "Bolka," has a great vogue in Holland; but who would not

be scandalised if Lord Chancellor Campbell were seen tripping on the light fantastic toe in Lincoln's Inn Hall, or if Mr. Justice Willes and Mr. Baron Martin were to have a heel-and-toe doubleshuffle set-to in the Temple Gardens?

And yet you say you saw a judge dance at Lady Coseymore's Grand New Year's Fête, in Paris. I have heard of a prime minister who makes plum puddings in his hat and cuts oranges into sucking-pigs for the amusement of his children at home. There is a Greek professor at one of our Universities, I believe, who is an admirable performer on the Jew's harp, and one of our famous English novelists is reckoned only a degree less expert than Gospodin Wiljalba Frikell as a conjuror. But a judge—a modern judge, dance, not *en petit comité*, but at a grand ball—never. It can't be. You must have been mistaken. Ah! stay. He was a French judge. Not more than thirty-five years of age, you say. With neat whiskers, evidently pomaded, and a beautiful leg and foot. M. le Président de la Toque des Pasperdus, of the Imperial Court of Brives-la-Gaillarde, is high up in the magistracy, and is reckoned one of the most finished waltzers under the second Empire. He spends his vacations at Hombourg or Baden, where he is in tremendous request with German baronesses and Russo-Polish princesses, who want partners—for the Waltz.

By the way, our own judicial sages are not averse from taking an occasional holiday at the pleasant watering-places on the Rhine. Mr. Nedwards, who ought to know, says that Mr. Thackeray once observed that the Hôtel des Quatres Saisons, at Hombourg, ought to be called the Hôtel de Quarter Sessions, from the number of legal gentlemen who frequented it during the long vacation; but no judge was yet found foolish enough to trust himself with a convoy of gyrating crinoline on the well-waxed *parquet*

of the Kursaal ball-room. The judges go up the Rhine to take the waters; and sometimes, I have been told, they make a valorous onslaught on the roulette, or the rouge et noir table. Catch Owlett, C.J., or Miniver, B., dancing. As for your M. de la Toque des Pasperdus, I don't consider such things as he judges at all. He is a mere clerk, my dear, a lacquey in the Imperial livery, removable at his Imperial Majesty's pleasure, and no more to be compared with the stately, inscrutably and preternaturally wise old gentlemen with the powdered birds' nests on their heads, and the scarlet petticoats whom you see perched on a bench in the Queen's Bench or the Common Pleas, than these humble epistles are to be compared with the eloquent epistles to his son of my immortal namesake. I will grant all M. des Pasperdus' agility in the ball-room, but I doubt and take exception to his law, his impartiality, and his learning.

I am delighted, my beloved child, that since your return to England our kind friends have taken you to very many parties and *soirées dansantes*, where you have had the opportunity of mixing in unexceptionable society, but I cannot conceal from myself the fact that the entertainment in which you participated, and due to the sumptuous hospitality of my Lady Coseymore, was of a nature far more and truly aristocratic than you could hope to see, or have seen, in England, under the auspices of our worthy friends the De Fytchetts. My heart positively glowed at reading your graphic details of that magnificent festivity, and of the distinguished personages there present, and with so many of whom you had the honour —although I dare say they thought, and very properly too, that the honour was on *their* side—of dancing.

There are some very worthy and perfectly genteel persons of my acquaintance who affect to think nothing of foreign rank and title, as if there had never been any conquerors but our

own with whom patrician families might have come over. Put all that nonsense out of your head, my dearest Louisa. It is illiberal, narrow-minded, and—worse than all—it is, in the highest degree, *ignorant* to hold such tenets. There is as good blood in the red ocean of heraldry as ever came out of it in England; and yonder German baron, with his forty-seven quarterings, and his thread-braided surtout, and yonder Italian count, with his long hair and questionable linen, who dines on macaroni for fourpence in an alley near Leicester Square, may—although the one teaches the oboe, and the other Ganganelli's letters, for a livelihood—have better blood in their veins than some purse-proud descendant of a Georgian contractor ennobled for his peculations, or some pedigree-proud offshoot from a Highland cattle-stealer. The most repulsive feature in English genealogical pretensions is, that we have a plutocracy grafted on aristocracy; and that the great-grandson of a coal-merchant, who has espoused the distant relative on the mother's side of an Irish peer, and is ridiculously proud of the alliance, really in his heart despises a Montmorency, a Noailles, an Orsini, or a Batthyani—who may have kept his good name, but has lost his broad acres. 'Tis the same in America. There are families in the United States absurdly vain of some English progenitor, who, very likely, was transported to the plantations, and who, from some perhaps fortuitous similarity in name, they persist in connecting with some great English family, such as the Howards or the Percys; while they are ashamed to mention their grandfather who fought in the revolutionary war, or their mother who strewed flowers in the path of George Washington when he entered New York. I generally find, in matters genealogical, that people are always proud of tracing their descent from the very last person whom they should be proud of being descended from.

As my Lady Coseymore is exceedingly *bien vue* by nearly every section of good French society, I do not wonder that the assemblage you met on New Year's night was as miscellaneous as it was illustrious. An English duke, my dear, you say was there. I am rejoiced that his Grace of Toppletoton should have condescended to make, by his presence, that brilliant gathering even more coruscatingly dazzling. His Grace wore the *culotte courte*, and the garter, and the blue ribbon *en sautoir* belonging thereto. I am enchanted. And there was the Marquis of Barefoot, who, they say, is too wicked to live in England, although he has £250,000 a year—a revenue, I should think, which might entitle a man to live anywhere, were he as wicked as Ahab. His Lordship resides wholly in Paris; he has a charming wicked mansion in the Champs Elysées. He spends £10,000 a year in the purchase of pictures by the old masters, and never was known to give away a penny in charity. Some of our great noblemen have very peculiar fancies. Perhaps in his youth he had a disappointment in love, and that has soured him, and made a misanthrope of him, as it did of Dirty Dick of Leadenhall Street—or Fenchurch, was it?—whom my poor dear mother used to tell us about. His Lordship did not dance, you say, but passed the whole *soirée* whispering in a corner to the Princess Criminil-Okholska. I am glad that she stared at you through her eye-glass, and that you thought her rude, and refused to be *présentée* to her. The Princess Criminil-Okholska belongs to one of the first Mingrelian families, and is immensely rich—50,000 peasants, or slaves rather, Mr. Nedwards says. She goes everywhere, both here and abroad; and makes more treaties, *dit-on*, in her boudoir than MM. the plenipotentiaries do in their solemn congresses. But I have heard of her Highness, and of her Highness's doings, when her *poor*

dear deceived purblind husband, the Count Criminil Converskoff—she is Princess in her own right—was here as ambassador from the great Cham in the year '40. The woman must be fifty by this time, if she be a day; and she is the very last person that a young lady, an English young lady, ought to know. I suppose, as usual, she wears very low-necked dresses, and is plastered from her coiffure to her shoes with diamonds. But diamonds will not make virtue, my darling.

Among the other English, you had Lord Claude Mifflin, the Chargé d'Affaires, and the usual sprinkling of English Guardsmen, bureaucrats, and do-nothing dandies; among whom, I presume, our Mr. Ferdinand de Fytchett and *your*—yes, your—Mr. Reginald Tapeleigh were conspicuous. You needn't endeavour to persuade me, Miss. Do you think I am quite blind—that I am entirely devoid of perception? Had I not the fullest confidence in Mrs. de Fytchett and our Argus eyes, I should say that the young gentleman to whom I had last alluded had been a great deal too much about your home in Pagoda Square since your return from abroad. He fetches books for you, does he? He executes little commissions, and runs upon little errands for Miss Louisa Chesterfield, does he? You find him useful in holding your skein of silk while you wind it off for your embroidery. Pray what did you say were his office hours? What is his salary, and has he any expectations from his family worth speaking of?

I can't dismiss Lady Coseymore's *fête* for a moment or two longer. Besides the distinguished English, and a gorgeous attendance of the Corps Diplomatique, including the Marchese de Bribante, Señor Puchero de la Tertullia, the Hereditary Prince of Sachsenhausen-Flügelstadt, and Kibab Effendi from Stamboul in addition to these, the ancient, the real, the immutable aristocracy from the Faubourg St. Ger-

main were there to do honour to Lady Coseymore. There was the Prince Duc de Roquefort-en-Bree, the Marquis de Carabas, and the Marquis de Pretantaille, the Comte de Côte Rôtie, the Chevalier de Pourceaugnac, the Bailli de Droitenjambe, and the Vidame de Turlupin. Ah! the great names! Ah! the good old times! I have no heart, after these high-sounding titles, to enumerate the frothy, mushroom dignitaries of the Empire, first and second—the Marshal's sons, the sham Count and Baron's daughters, the barrocracy, the bureaucracy, and the boursocracy. My Louisa danced her fill, and was happy. What did it matter to her if the Baron who was her partner had an ancestor who fought in the Crusades, or was the son of one of Louis Philippe's deputies, who made a fortune out of soup kitchens and warm baths?

CONSTANTIA CHESTERFIELD.

LETTER THE ELEVENTH.

ON VARIOUS RECIPES FOR TEACHING THE YOUNG IDEA HOW TO SHOOT.

WITH grief mingled with amazement, my dearest, your mamma has lately received a mass of letters from persons whose acquaintance she not only has not the pleasure of enjoying, but of whom she positively never heard in her life before, complaining in the bitterest terms that she has failed lately in writing her accustomed number of letters to her daughter. Can it be that my Louisa has made her parent's communications public? Forbid the thought, gentility. I know that there are many cunning, but unscrupulous persons, who inveigle you into writing letters to them, and, so soon as they have a sufficient quantity of your manuscript in hand, pop off to the nearest bookseller and make a bargain with him for the bulk of the more or less precious epistles. Mr. Pope's friends served him this way, and Mr. Curll was ever ready to publish.

People have written letters to me from the remotest quarters of this empire, begging for my autograph, or for the loan of ten pounds, or to be informed of the exact date of the death of Queen Anne, merely, I am persuaded, for the purpose of entering into a correspondence, and, I am afraid, *with ulterior motives.* A gentleman of whom I have no greater knowledge than of the man in the moon, wrote me the other day from Gobowen, near Oswestry (where is Gobowen, near

Oswestry?), threatening that if I did not, by return of post, comply with his request for a pecuniary loan, he would "rush unbidden into the regions of the eternal unknown." I was dreadfully flurried at the idea of any one committing suicide on my account, and, very incautiously, wrote back to say I really could not lend the sum my correspondent required; whereupon he wrote back, thanking me for my "amusing communication," and demanding the immediate remittance of a post-office order for a smaller sum. I had courage enough not to answer this; but he has been pestering me ever since, as though I owed him the money; just as the man in the jest-book, who wanted to borrow half-a-crown, and had a shilling lent him, continually dunned his creditor for the odd eighteenpence. Be careful how you write letters to people you know; be doubly careful against writing to people you don't know. Letters in Vanity Fair, hints Mr. Thackeray, should be written in ink that will fade to invisibility after seven years. I don't go so far as that; but ah! how much pain, and shame, and anguish, how many scandalous exposures in law courts might be saved, if writing-ink were only a little less durable! Who would not dearly like to recall some things she has written, ay, the very best of us? But the writing won't fade, my dear; fire, fire won't burn paper that has got any ink on it; and long years afterwards the writing on the sheet will turn up against us, to be pryed into and commented upon like the *Graffite* of Pompeii.

This is an age when curious folks not only collect our letters and docket them, as though they were invoices, but lie in wait for our conversation to make notes of it in their common-place books. There died, not long since, in St. James's Place, a vain, rich old man, called Rogers, who had written some poetry now forgotten, and on the strength

of his banker's account—(nay, he was a banker himself)—had entertained many great and clever people. After his death his heirs had the bad taste to publish his "Recollections" of the famous persons he had conversed with; that is to say, the bald twaddling notes he had made in quite a "private inquiry" manner of their every-day and often slipshod talk. He had just twisted History's noble pages into threadpapers and parchment thrums, and left them to us as records of such mighty ones as Wellington and Talleyrand, and as Fox and Burke. Take care, Louisa, you do not find some day a memorandum-book left by one of such eavesdroppers as the old banker in St. James's Place, and opening it come upon such passages—vapid and disjointed, and tame—as, "Miss Chesterfield. . . . . . She said she likes cold veal. Had had the measles. . . . . . . Could not dance with one shoe off. . . . . . Thought Tupper underrated. . . . . . Once sang '*Deh non voler*' with a bad cold in her head," and the like. The growing fondness for such petty, and I confess, irritates me, and their mention always makes me think of the story of grand old Doctor Martin Luther, who, being at table-talk—and I dare say talking nonsense—one evening with his wife Kate, became suddenly aware of the presence of a student, who, tablets and pencil in hand, was crouching beneath the table stenographing the colloquy *mot à mot*. The Doctor dragged this "special correspondent" before his time from his hiding-place. He took him by the ear; he flung a basinful of warm gruel (prepared for the good man's supper) in his face, quite spoiling the student's new Holland bands, and he dismissed him with a doctorial kick, saying, "Friend, do not forget to enter also these occurrences on thy tablets." A very energetic reformer was Doctor Martin Luther.

With regard to the complaints. I have consulted with Mr. Nedwards, and he says, "Take no notice thereof, my

dear Madam." I have consulted myself, and the answer is, explain. Tell then, my dear Louisa, those who have complained to you, that these letters were never intended to form a continuous serial; that my letters to my daughter are not a novel, or a series of travels, or a round of consecutive narrative; that they have been, and will be, continued from time to time just when they may be thought amusing to those who read them, and that so soon as the Doctor, and that greater body of medical advisers whom you, my dear, have admitted to their perusal, and who are called, I think, the public, cease to be amused by them, I shall cry, "Hold, enough;" and drop the pen for good and all.

And yet, to you, my child, I confess myself somewhat in arrears. Many doubts of yours I have left unresolved, many queries unanswered, many events in your life—no very grave events are there to trouble that placid, smiling stream—uncommented upon. Not that I think you want a mentor always by your side. How dreadfully that owl-like old lady, disguised as an old gentleman with a long beard, must have bored our Telemachus sometimes! You have a duenna, Mrs. de Fytchett, who will see that the cavaliers do not play the guitar beneath your windows at unseasonable hours, that they do not introduce themselves to your drawing-room in the disguise of music-masters, and that they do not pop *billets doux* in the hood of your mantle when you walk abroad. But bah! even to think of such a thing. You live in London, South West, and not in Seville; and mantles—burnouses, as you call them—with *capuchon* hoods, are out of fashion. You have seen the world, lately, without the aid of your mamma's spectacles. You have been to many balls besides that famous one of dear Lady Coseymore's in Paris. You have seen all the pantomimes that were worth seeing. You have been to a concert at St. James's Hall, and an

oratorio at Exeter Hall. I can appreciate, to some extent, I humbly hope, the magnificent beauty of Handel, and Haydn, and Mendelsohn's sublime music. It is very poor imagery to say that "Sound an alarm" runs through my veins like liquid fire; that the sweet sad notes of "He was despised" make me weep; that I reverence and bow before the tender-loving strains of "Comfort ye my people," and "Lord remember David."

And who, I ask, is not awakened, as by the sound of a great golden trumpet, when the first triumphant burst of the Hallelujah chorus echoes through the grand hall? There is a mingled power in the sacred music of our great composers that now softens us to meekness and contrition, and now rouses and confirms us in a strong, stern faith and hope; that lifts us above the peddling cares and wretched necessities of life, and nerves us to the knowledge that the harps of glory and the angelic choir are no vain imaginings, but that we have—albeit the very faintest—their reflex here, permitted to be shed on earth by the men upon whom Heaven has bestowed the divine gift of genius. Yet, although Meinheer Handel was but a German Kapell Meister, and in London entered into operative speculations, and had silly squabbles with Signor Bononcini—one must be convinced, when his gorgeous music peals upon the amazed ear, that this man, George Frederick Handel, poor, blind, periwigged old music-master, had held discourse with the Higher and the Better Influences, and that, when alone, his fingers passed the organ keys, and the swelling sounds were wafted upwards, something of that Holy Influence encircled him, which the *naïve faut* of the old painters has symbolised under the guise of the angels who guard St. Cecilia. Yet I love and stand in awe at such tremendous performances; but I much prefer—forgive the crude and unromantic thought—*to listen to an*

oratorio with my eyes shut. The conductor's baton, the rustling sheets of music paper, the gesticulating band, trouble me. How am I to picture to myself that man with the pomatumed hair as David? Can yonder fat gentleman with the large watchchain be Samson? Did ever Delilah wear a moire antique dress with a Maltese lace collar, and cuffs? Zadok, the priest, should have his jewelled breastplate, his frontlet and mitre, his stole and ephod. I see people in broadcloth and crinoline, giving, by their very presence and aspect, incongruity to a grandly harmonious whole. And how am I to believe that the strong-lunged, well-fed chorus, whom I know in private life to be respectable professionals and amateurs—how am I to believe that these weekly-salaried singing citizens are the people of Israel, or that they are the Philistine warriors?

There is an occurrence you have mentioned to me in connection with one of your visits to an acquaintance you have formed, which has made a somewhat deep impression on my mind. You give me—I have the letter before me now—a lengthened and amusing account of Mrs. Petworth and her young family: of how she is a very learned and scientific lady, something like the Borrioboola Gha philanthropist in Mr. Dickens's "Bleak House;" of how she is for ever at her desk regenerating mankind on foolscap paper, how she drives her husband in sheer weariness to the club, how her ill-kept, ill-disciplined children toss and tumble about, and while they almost adore the ground she walks upon, nearly worry her life out with their tricks and perversity. My dear, Mrs. Petworth and her learning and science, and her bear garden full of little cubs growing up to be quite grisly for want of licking into shape—these may all seem to you very comic and amusing; but the description awakens in me the saddest and most serious of reflections. You may say that I, too, scribble, and pride myself,

very probably without cause, upon the possession of some half-peck of learning not ordinarily acquired by my sex; but, alas! *je n'ai plus d'enfants.* I am helpless here, and solitary. I have but one little lamb, and she is in the fold of the stranger. You live with grown-up people, my darling; you are a young woman, and so proud of your newly-acquired dignity and heritage of womanhood, that you would rather forget all about childhood, about cross schoolmistresses and grumpy governesses, and scolding mammas. You have no mamma to scold you now—she is far away; and, were she near you, you would be her equal and companion. You don't want to be told about lessons and exercises, about rewards and punishments, about the tree being inclined the way the twig is bent. Perhaps I do you personally an injustice, but I am but symbolising in you the thought of most young women in your degree and of your age. I know that girls, the best and kindest hearted, are cross and snappish to their younger sisters, tell them not to ask questions, order them out of the room, box their ears too, sometimes, slyly, if they have authority, or the chance.

Girls always take notice of babies, and are immensely fond of those "tiddy-iddy" creatures. *C'est dans leur jeu.* The gentlemen, though they abhor the sight, touch, or propinquity of babies not their own, like to see the young ladies *they* like noticing and fondling an infant. Some girls even I have known of the very humble orders—those wonderful girls of eight or nine, in pinafores whose washing and mangling mothers send them out with babies almost as large as themselves to carry, who know how to choose potatoes and green stuff, to attain the exact pawnable value on a fustian jacket, and to stave off the man who comes for the rent—some such precocious philosophers I have known almost as precocious in maternal fondness. They are passionately fond of babies,

as babies, not as means of attracting attention. They pet and coddle them, and study the most abstruse of negro melodies specially for their amusement. They are in fear and trembling lest they should come to harm in the inclement weather, and at the slightest alarm of rain, cover up the poor bald heads of their tiny charges with scraps of their own scant clothing. I have known a girl of eight, as a tremendous grace and favour, lend her baby to another pal for five minutes. The favour would be priceless, only girl number two requites it by lending *her* baby for the like space of time to girl number one. The aim of feminine juvenile enjoyment seems to be reached when three little girls sit on one doorway with three infants on their laps, and compare babies. Quarrels sometimes arise as in the celebrated pomological case (Paris in Hisparides Reports); but the competition is ordinarily amicable, and the prize, in the shape of a haporth of sweetstuff, is awarded to the baby that was biggest and cried the loudest.

There are three great sorrows, three dreadful perils, that menace the life of a street child of eight—I call them street children, for they live almost entirely on door-steps, on kerbs, and at corners, their own dwellings being so confined and miserable—these sorrows are to spill, or to be detected in drinking, the dinner beer which she has fetched from the public-house ; to lose any portion of the "change out," when she has been sent on an errand ; and to drop her baby. This last is the *nessun maggior dolore*, the "sorrows' crown of sorrows." And I am given to think (in a parenthesis) that the great tenderness and solicitude evinced by these almost pauper children for the weakly nurslings under their care, is, that they have seen, from their very earliest infancy, the great drama of life, with its infinite varieties, its infinite woes and troubles, played out before them. Baby was born

and suckled, baby may die and be laid out in its small, rough coffin, in the one room where the child and parents, and her brothers and sisters eat, and drink, and work, and sleep. Oh! preternaturally wise in your own esteem, these ragged children are your superiors in wisdom. We laugh and point to little miss dressing and undressing her doll, and whisper sapient things about the intuition of the duties of maternity; but Sarah Jane of the back street never had a doll beyond this pallid little innocent, and she has scarcely done dandling it for "mother," when the parish doctor comes, and she is a mother, and has a pallid baby of her own to dandle.

Mind, I am not so cynical as to deny that well-dressed, well-educated, grown-up young ladies are not exceedingly fond of babies, when nurse brings them for ten minutes or so from the comfortable nursery; but woe betide the importunate little damsel who interrupts Sister Ann while she is writing her letters or working her faldstools. "Take those tiresome children away," I have often heard some handsome, impatient girl exclaim; while I will do the other sex the credit to admit that they are usually exceedingly gentle and forbearing with the little people, studying their curious ways, assuaging their little angers, listening to their wonderful tales about the "Fissamen's child'n dat was downed," the "Large big horses dat de ittle dog bark at," "De gay mouse dat run all along de carpet, and Papa say a 'wat, a wat,'" and other notable histories and excerpts, mostly signifying nothing at all. I have oftener seen a child go up to a man and pull his whiskers, and say, "I like you," or "Do you ever have marmalade at home?" than I have seen one of these small members of the independent persuasion approach a handsome, proud young lady with expressions of endearment. Indeed, I have known great beauties pulled down a peg—so to use the

vulgar term—by such inquiries of *franc parler* as, "How old are you?" "What a long nose you 've got;" or, "Why do you bite your lips?" and I once knew a little girl—but she *was* a termagant—who bit a haughty and resplendent dame, assigning, when corrected, as a reason for the act, that "He" (her uncle in spectacles) "said they was vay pitty," whereas "she" (the resplendent dame) "wouldn't look at Doddy's new blue kid shoes."

Mind, once for all, when I speak of the too frequent indifference of young women to young children, I allude but to the unmarried ones. You see, it is but natural, after all. All their thoughts, all their energies, all their aspirations tend to one point—conquest. But so soon as a young woman is married, and is a mother, all her latent love for child-kind bursts forth. She loves them all—the big, the little, the slim, the stout, the boys, the girls, the romps, the prudes. She has rewards for their goodnesses and remedies for their naughtinesses. She is full of counsel on physic, diet, exercise, and education. She can expatiate as enthusiastically on round jackets and corduroys as on pinafores and socks. Dear me! I have known a good matron talk half an hour on the infamous conduct of Bubb, the head boy at Doctor Gradus's, tearing the title-page out of her niece's youngest's Cæsar. And when the boys and girls grow too old to be fondled and petted by these good women, when they are above plum cakes and "tips," dolls and India-rubber balloons, they begin to admire their stalwart or graceful proportions in secret, and think what nice husbands they would make for their daughters, what willing, cheery helpmates for their sons. God speed all that is good and honest in the world, and chiefly match-making! The philosopher declares that the mamma-syrens with dyed fronts egged on their daughters to sing seductive airs, as Ulysses in his ship went

through the waves; but I say there are motherly doves knowing as to pairing time, and expert in the ways of billing and cooing; and I say that when Cock Robin married Jenny Wren—he was a good husband, albeit sometimes wild—there was no sincerer mourner at the red-vested C. R.'s untimely grave than his mamma-in-law (the widow of Sir Christopher Wren, who built that beautiful birds' nest just under the ball of St. Paul's Cathedral, London). Some of these days I intend to write a book in defence of mothers-in-law. It will be preceded by one containing an apology for old maids, and followed by a third, comprising my long-promised vindication of the average conduct and character of stepmothers. I am sure there has been enough parrot-cry abuse of all these three classes of feminity for some one to undertake their defence.

Mem: from the whole of the above remarks, I exclude governesses and schoolmistresses. I believe many love children, and undertake the irksome and responsible task of education from their sympathy and earnest vocation; but to the ordinary and generic schoolmistress the child is a financial investment, a terminable annuity, an unit in a tabular statement. Moreover, she can scarcely be frank with the child. As many parents, so many faces must the schoolmistress have. Read "Villette," by Currer Bell. As to the governess, she may be, and is in very many admirable instances, devoted not only through duty, but through affection, to the interest of her pupil; but to the ordinary and generic governess the child is only so much concentrated headache inspirated weariness, and too often, alas! accumulated insult. How happy she is at night, bare and lonely as the schoolroom is, when the worrying little things are gone to bed! Read the "Life of Charlotte Brontë," by Mrs. Gaskill.

And now let me read Mrs. Petworth's legend to you, not

in a comic spirit as you have done, but in its serious bearings on the relations of life, and the fitness of things. For I wish you to study the ways of children, as I hope and believe you will have to be among children some day—children that will love you—children that you will love and cherish. Doesn't it strike you that Mrs. P.'s might be a happier family if she studied Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, and Murchison on the Silurian Formation, a little less, and darned her children's stockings a little? Here is a lady whose husband has a good income, and every wish and requisite to make her home happy. She is healthy and brisk enough, and Doctor Warrener says he has seldom seen children finer than hers. When Mr. Petworth comes home from the Stock Exchange, tired and eager to enjoy the delights of his fireside, and the communion and conversation of his wife's children, he finds only a pack of disorderly brats, who have turned all the furniture topsy-turvy, and have broken a good deal of it, too, since he left home for the city, and a studious, abstracted woman poring over some musty book she understands no more about than I do of the Stade Dues question, or scribbling Platonic compliments to the editor of some twopenny-halfpenny journal, who has inserted some pages of her mongrel metaphysical disquisitions in the hope that she will ask him to dinner. He should properly find his children trim, well combed, spruce, yet obedient, ready for a game at romps if need be, but amenable to being smoothed into proper order again immediately afterwards. How is he to take any solace in the society of these young cubs, their minds ruffled, their bodies heated by recent and furious intestine squabbles? The little state has been divided against itself; and the maternal police, instead of preserving, or at least restoring order, has been collating the Pandects of Justinian. The father's ears are beset by

clamorous recriminations in shrill, little voices, by angry denunciations of Tommy, who took away Polly's doll, by dolorous complaints of Toddlekins having swallowed the cameleopard in Freddy's Noah's ark. Bits of feet are stamped, and pudgy cheeks distended and inflamed by rage. Little hands are ready to tear out little eyes. There has been a battle royal for the sofa pillows; mamma's ink has been spilt on the carpet; Master Freddy has involuntarily lanced his gum (which is bleeding freely) with a Mordan's gold pen; Toddlekins has fallen down, and got a bump on her flaxen head as big as an egg; and the new lace curtains have been pulled off the pole. Happy is it if one of the windows hasn't been broken, and the canary bird drowned in his own water-cruet. Now, pray, whose fault is all this? If mamma has no time to attend to her children, you may say, she can surely employ trustworthy servants, and discipline may be preserved in a well-regulated nursery. Apart from the folly, wickedness, and injustice of delegating to inferiors those duties which properly belong to the head of a family, there is this fact to be borne in mind, that, save in very rare cases, and when the head domestic is a poor friend or relative, servants can never manage children whose mother is incapable, or who neglects to direct their management herself. "I don't care for *you*," is the one persistent answer of the child who knows that the servant who endeavours to control him is not supported by the chief domestic authority. Toddlekins will fight, and scratch, and kick; and Freddy, who can't speak plain yet, will lisp out the most virulent abuse to Nurse Martha, or Nursemaid Jane, who now entreats, and now tries to coerce him into being good.

Give your servants authority to correct such children? Yes, certainly, if you wish to rear up as undesirable a brood of young serpents as ever were seen out of a Cingalese jungle—

filial rattlesnakes, torpedos, and cobra di capellas—you will allow a servant to punish a child—at least one who has passed the age of infancy. The thief in the fable bit off his mother's ear at the gallows' foot, because she had not properly corrected him when young. I think he would have been justified in biting off both her ears if, in accordance with the culpable practice of some mothers, she had caused him when young to be caned by the footman. Moreover, servants, when they see their mistress pre-occupied with useless avocations, or, through laziness, wholly inattentive, are very apt to mind their own business—such is life—and utterly to neglect that for which they were engaged. Whilst Madam is silurianising in the drawing-room, Nurse Martha and Nursemaid Jane are comfortably drinking tea, embroidering their own fancy collars, reading their own literature (*Muck's Miscellany, The Mysteries of the Milliner's Back Shop*, and the like), or receiving select parties of their own friends in the kitchen or at the area railings. The children don't care for the nursery; there is not enough to pry into or to destroy there. They have drummed on that deal table, sawed at the legs of those Windsor chairs, torn those natural history pictures from the wall, scalded themselves with that tea-kettle, licked the paint off that wooden dessert service, cut their fingers with the tools in that chest, and run splinters into the quick of their nails often enough. They want something else. They would rather be with mamma and worry her life out. The nursemaid either cajoles them with a thick piece of bread and butter, or terrifies them with a brutal slap. Mamma they can cajole and terrify themselves, and get almost everything out of—for the poor woman, in her shiftless way, really loves her children. They can extract sweetmeats, table ornaments, money, pictures to lick and tear—anything, so that they will only be quiet, and let Mamma do her reading and writing. But they won't be quiet,

and Mamma can't get on, so she loses her temper, and there is a general rebellion and—well it is an Irish word, and Lady Morgan uses it in her works—an awful shindy.

Enter Papa. Enter Mr. Petworth from the city, with his head full of bulling and bearing, scrip and agio, cent. per cent., and settling day. He knows nothing of the causes of the disturbance, he only sees it at the height of its raging fury. But he is vehemently called upon to put an end to the revolt forthwith. What a duty for the poor man! To be summoned to officiate as executioner without knowing anything of the merits of the case, or who are the real culprits. The S. P. Q. R. are at variance, so the Lictor and his fasces are called in, and the former has to perform his functions, quite ignorant of the demerits of the culprits who yell beneath his strokes. Is it to be wondered at that in the end the Mr. P.'s of this world grow weary of these hangman's offices, that they become disgusted and ashamed of appearing to their children only in the guise of taskmasters and slave-drivers—and the surest way to alienate a child's affections from his father is to teach him to regard the parent that should be loved as well as feared as a stern Being, the incarnation of the Bogey his stupid nurse has told him of—that in the end they, too, let their children go their own way, and neglect and avoid them? I know nothing more dreadful than this awful breach in many families, that without any visible efforts on either side yawns wider and deeper every day, and ends at last in an unfathomable abyss, in which all that is beautiful and loving, and tender and sacred, is swallowed up for ever; leaving nothing but a cold, black, solitary hearth, and a child's broken toy among the dust and ashes.

There are extremes, you know, in everything. The opposite pole to culpable neglect and indifference is harassing and

irritating vigilance over children. In another letter, not the next, but when you have laid this one well to heart, I shall have something to tell you about a Mrs. Hugh Hornyhand, a lady who has a very large family here in Pumpwell, and pursues quite another method of teaching the young idea how to shoot.

CONSTANTIA CHESTERFIELD.

LETTER THE TWELFTH.

MISS CHESTERFIELD HAS WITNESSED TWO GRAND AND INTERESTING CEREMONIALS.

Mr. Nedwards, the variety of whose information is only equalled by its extent, tells me that, in the remarkable epoch in which we live, there positively exist and flourish many newspapers which are sold for the ridiculously small sum of a penny a piece. It is as though Shanko Fanko, my page, were to tell me that the chemists and druggists were selling sarsaparilla at a penny the bottle. Penny newspapers! Wonders will never cease. The world must be coming to an end; and I am not astonished that the estimable Doctor Cumming—a most learned divine, I have heard, but with a voice resembling the sound of a coffee-mill grinding Scotch oatmeal—should be in such great tribulation about it. Of course these penny newspapers are very revolutionary in their politics, and recommend the immediate deposition of the Sovereign, and establishment of the guillotine. But what should my Louisa know about such matters? Mr. Nedwards says no; that the penny press is vigorous, yet decorous; patriotic, yet firm in the defence of law and order. He says that these penny journals circulate in immense numbers, and to the remotest corners of the empire, and that nearly all the newspapers will have to come down to a penny, soon. *Qu'en sais-je?* What

should the antiquated invalid at Pumpwell know about such matters?

Your Papa took an interest in journalism; had dined with Mr. Barnes, of the *Times;* and Mr. Perry, of the *Morning Chronicle.* He used to live in the same house, in Tavistock Square, now inhabited, as your letters tell me, by Mr. Charles Dickens, the great novelist. Once, too, I think, at a public meeting, Sir Charles sat next to that atrocious Mr. Cobbett, who used to attack the aristocracy so shamefully in a paper called the *Gridiron.* Your dear Papa said that Mr. C. was a tall, hearty, farmer-looking man, in a pepper-and-salt coat, drab shorts, top-boots, and a beautiful shirt-frill. He had a placid, beaming face, and a remarkably mild, intelligent eye, and did not in the least look like the demagogue, Jacobin, Radical, he was. So different do we seem from what we really are. Who would imagine, to look at his portrait, that Doctor Johnson ever made a joke? Does Lord John Russell, in the photographs they publish of him, look like a statesman? My dear, he more nearly resembles a parish clerk. I knew a young person once, who, in features and expression, was the very image of Raffaelle's *Belle Jardinière.* Child, she used to eat periwinkles with a pin, and drink Dublin stout out of the neck of a bottle; and, although her husband was *a most respectable man,* a partner in a London banking firm, she hadn't an H in her whole vocabulary. There is a man here, who comes round for subscriptions to the Cruel Islands Mission (Wantong branch), who has a head exactly like Roubiliac's bust of Shakspeare; and yet, I declare, he is a perfect ass.

As to these penny newspapers, I only mentioned them *en passant:* they never enter *these* doors. I take in the *Times,* and Shanko Fanko reads it to me daily; although I must say that I fail to recognise in the modern journal the respect for

authority and reverence for long-standing institutions which characterised the *Times* of old. Stay; wasn't it the *Courier* that was so respectable and Conservative a publication? At all events, skipping those dreary politics, and that seditious foreign intelligence—who wants to know what the banditti and the pifferari, and the Pope and the *wicked Jesuits* are doing in Central Italy?—there is always a great deal of amusement in the supplement of the *Times*. So many people, every day, who want things, or are themselves wanted; and nobody ever seems to get what he wants! Then the "Furnished apartments," the "Board and residence," the "Sales by auction," the mysterious initials—there is more in those initials, I am sure, than meets the eye, and Government should look to the matter—and especially the "Births, deaths, and marriages." I am convinced, in my own mind, that not one person in a hundred looks into the *Times* supplement in quest of what he or she herself wants, but merely to ascertain what other people want. The supplement is all very well; but for real, solid yet refined, amusing yet instructive, reading give me the *Morning Post*. I love that elegant gazette. I think its editor ought to be knighted. I am sure he must live in the best society, and I only wish he would publish an edition of his journal for the *élite*, nicely printed on mauve paper, and perfumed with patchouli or wood violet. This week I have reason to love my dear *Morning Post* more than ever. Not only for its fashionable intelligence, not only for its marriages in high life, its arrivals at Claridge's Hotel, *soirées dansantes*, and its *fêtes champêtres*, but for the glowing description it gives of the first Drawing-Room of the season, and the presentation at the Court of Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria of my darling Louisa. To read these enchanting lines among the presentations:—

"Miss Chesterfield, by the Dowager Lady Coseymore." And again, among the general list of visitors:—

"Misses Skimmington, Talbot de Tallboys, Van Yallagal, Montupperlip, (2), Wigglegrigg, Rumkinson, (3), CHESTERFIELD, Stiltonburgh."

To be twice mentioned in the *Court Circular* and the *Morning Post!* To be enumerated in the roll of the best and bravest and fairest cavaliers in England! The Stiltonburghs came over with the Conqueror; the founder of the Van Yallagal family was Governor of Batavia before he visited our shores in the train of William the Third; a Talbot de Tallboys signed Magna Charta; Sir Rindoff Stiltonburgh defended Cheseleigh House when it was besieged by Cromwell; the Skimmingtons once owned half the County Galway; there are two dormant peerages and one attainder in the Wigglegrigg family; the Montupperlips quarter the arms of Fortinbras and Fierabras; and the Rumkinsons, albeit a mere city family *ab origine*, are enormously wealthy, and the girls are sure to marry high up in the House of Lords.

And to think of that dear, kind, thoughtful soul, Lady Coseymore, she who scarcely ever visits England, braving the perils of the ocean and coming to town expressly for the purpose of presenting the proud and happy, and I trust grateful Louisa Chesterfield to our beloved Sovereign. Ah! how I wish that Lady Coseymore were about to make a permanent stay in the metropolis! Ah! how I regret my cruel and hopeless captivity on this weary sofa, among these whist-playing, medicinal water-drinking Bœotians! I am afraid, my darling, that you are becoming too *distinguée* for Pagoda Square. (Carefully obliterate this paragraph in the very blackest of ink ere you show it to *anybody*.) The De Fytchetts are all very well; but, *entre nous*, Mr. de Fytchett

is only an *employé.* He went to the drawing-room, you say, as a Deputy Lieutenant. Yes, dear, certainly; but then, what is a Deputy Lieutenant after all? Amelia-Charlotte had a headache, and could not go. I dare say. Frederica de Fytchett had a swelled face and a gumboil, and cried her eyes out because in that condition she was not presentable, and because, I shrewdly suspect, my Lady Coseymore did not care very much about presenting her. Ferdinand was there of course, the vain puppy, in right of his uniform. He had stayed out dreadfully late the previous night, you tell me, playing Pool at the Carambole Club. What is Pool? Something wicked and gambling and ruinous I am sure. Why doesn't that young man go to his regiment? Is he always having leave of absence? Oh! he is at Aldershott is he, and pops out of town now and then? Why are there not citadels and fortresses and things where young men in the army can keep guard, and lie on camp beds, and be shot if they do not know the countersign? In my time they used to send wild young men in the infantry to the West Indies, where they had good wholesome yellow fevers, or else to Ireland, where, I warrant, my Lord Lieutenant found plenty of work for them, in keeping the rebellious peasantry in order. I have no patience with bits of boys who play Pool and pop up from Aldershott, and swagger from St. James's Palace to their clubs, to show their *ridiculous* red tunics and flower-pot hats. Mr. Reginald Tapeleigh, I am informed, was not at the drawing-room, much to Miss Louisa's grief. My dear, he has no *locus standi* for all his fine connections. He is—there, don't be angry—only a Government clerk. You say that you would have given anything to have seen his "fine martial figure among the glittering throng." Stuff and nonsense! If his figure be "so fine and martial," why doesn't he enlist in the Life Guards; or, better still,

purchase a *charge* in that ancient and honourable corps, the Gentlemen-at-Arms? He will have nothing to do, save to stand on a staircase or in a vestibule with a great halbert in his hand, and wear a uniform much finer than that of a field-marshal. I bear the young man no ill-will, however; and when he can get leave from his Department, and comes to Pumpwell, I shall be happy to see him.

You were dressed, my darling—but stay: see what it is to get in arrear with one's correspondence. I am forestalling matters, and till this moment I had quite forgotten that ever so long before that famous drawing-room at which you were presented, it was your fortune to participate, although not in so prominent a capacity, in another gorgeous ceremonial. The Lord Great Chamberlain, through the intermediary of Mr. Reginald Tapeleigh (the young man can be of *some* service, I find) sent Mrs. de Fytchett a couple of tickets for the House of Lords, available for the day on which Her Majesty opened Parliament. "Morning costume" was on the huge delightful placard; and in the smartest of bonnets and mantles, my Louisa and her kind chaperon (I always liked Amelia-Charlotte, and it was very kind of her to take you instead of Frederica), drove down in modest state of broughamage to the New Palace at Westminster.

What a sad disappointment it must have been when, the carriage setting you down at the Peers' entrance, and in the genteelest of styles, a courteous but inexorable inspector of police, with white kid gloves, and silver lace on his collar, gently barred the portal, and told you that your tickets were available—not as you had hoped for the interior of the House of Lords, but only for the Royal Gallery—the grand carved gilt and carpeted vestibule, indeed, through which Her Majesty and her suite pass in procession to the House. And how aggravated must have been your feelings when

sadly wending your way towards a door where a compact crowd of well-dressed ladies and gentlemen were huddled together, very much resembling—but for the substitution of evening for morning dress—the throng one used to see before the pit door of the old Opera House on Grisi's benefit night—how mortified, and yet puzzled, you must have been, when there came swaggering up to you, with patent-leather boots, a purple satin scarf, with a sham carbuncle in it, and a broad-brimmed hat reposing on his right whisker, that odious and Irish Mr. O'Leprahaun, who is one of Mrs. de Fytchett's "intellectual" friends, and who has some mysterious power of supplying her with private boxes for the Opera and Theatres, when Amelia-Charlotte does not feel disposed to purchase them at Hammond's or Sams's. I can see the wretch, though I never set eyes on him. I can hear his hideous brogue, and his "How de du, leedees?" Oh! that dreadful, affected Irishman, who tries to conceal his brogue under a veneer of euphuism, and mingles macaroni with the Dublin Jackeen. Why, when St. Patrick banished the toads and frogs from Ireland, didn't he extirpate the Irish as well? The man was absolutely in possession of a ticket of admission for the gallery of the inaccessible House of Lords itself; and he was swaggering on there to gaze down upon the Judges and the Bishops, the Peers and the Peeresses, the Corps Diplomatique, and the very throne of our august Sovereign. Where did he get it? You say that he went to Lord Macaulay's funeral, and the Princess Royal's marriage, and the famous aristocratic fête at Cremorne; that he was blown up in the Great Eastern; that he was at Balmoral when the British Association were not so very hospitably treated at that abode of royalty; that he attends prizefights, public dinners, private views at the Royal Academy, the Speaker's levée, deputations to the Prime Minister, Committees of the House of Commons,

coroners' inquests, the Church of St. George's-in-the-East on Sunday night, and under the special patronage of Mr. Inspector Howie—what does a police inspector want in a church?—the stalls at the Opera, the night rehearsals of pantomimes, and executions at the Old Bailey. "The only places I 'm not free of," he says—at least, *you* say he says—"are the proivate swarryees at Windsor Kyastle, and the drawhing rooms at Cohrt. There 'tis the Cohrt Newsman teeks that trobble aff our han's." The man belongs to the newspapers; *voilà le mot de l'énigme;* and he has his admission card to the gallery of the House in order that the spectacle of the opening of Parliament may be described in flowery language in the next day's sheet of the newspaper to which he belongs.

You silly child! couldn't you see what "morning costume" meant in the corner of your card? Did you think that bonnets and mantles, even the handsomest, were admitted to the body of that gorgeous, gilded chamber? I believe that the housekeeper of the Lords entertains a select party of female friends on opening day, and that they look down on the magnificent scene and solemn proceedings from some points of espial in the roof, ventilators or what not; but the crimson morocco benches appropriated to the peeresses are occupied, as is dignified and decorous, by ladies in full evening array, blazing in diamonds, rustling in trains of rich brocades, magnificent in point lace and ostrich plumes, and gold and silver and pearls, and all manner of orient gems. I have seen that grand sight once, and by favour; I am not permitted to tell in what manner. I saw it all. The bishops in their lawn and the judges in their scarlet and miniver, and their collars of S. S., with their huge fleecy wigs; the heralds with their strange, gorgeous tabards, and banerolled trumpets; the ambassadors, covered with stars and ribbons; the tottering old manificos who bore the gleaming crown and

ponderous sword of state; the mace, that enormous gilt poker; the great seal of England, in its embroidered seal; and his lordship the Chancellor in his gold robe, black silk stockings, pumps and lace ruffles, carrying the imposing sigillum, mincingly. After all, it is, maybe, but a show. The robe-makers and upholsterers and orris-broiderers; the milliners and tailors and army-accoutrement makers; the court milliners, *plumassiers*, and artificial florists have had their part, and perhaps the greater one, in this splendid pageant. Take the crown away from its cushion; scrape the gilding off that great gingerbread coach; unharness the eight fat cream-coloured palfreys, and put humble wagon horses in their stead; make yonder feeble field marshal, with the blue goggles screening his poor dim eyes, shoulder an umbrella or a mop in lieu of that tremendous glaive of estate, with its golden hilt and velvet scabbard; sweep away halberdiers and gold sticks, life guardsmen and laced footmen, heralds and gentlemen pensioners; stars, garters, plumes, ribbons, ermine, lawn, and gold and silver brocade, and we might reduce the opening of the British Wittenagemote to a proceeding as prosaic as a vestry meeting or an election committee.

Are these barbarous pomps and tinsel and glitter needed? Mr. Cobden (before he grew so fond of having *têtes-à-têtes* with Emperors) once asked the question in something like a manner that required answer. He asked; but the beef-eaters yet strut in ruffs, and embroidered doublets, and red legs, and the old gingerbread caravan yet rumbles at the tails of the eight cream-coloured palfreys. The State coachman has not lost an ounce of his fat, or a grain of powder from his wig; the same trumpets flourish, and the same heralds wear emblazoned table napkins, back and front, over the black dress pantaloons and patent-leather boots of every-day life. Could we not manage to get on, I

wonder, without Garter and Norroy, without Rouge Dragon and Bluemantle and Portcullis? How would it be if Queen Victoria came down to the House in a single-horse brougham, and, taking the Royal speech out of her reticule, read it without more ado to the assemblage; then, sitting down on the throne with her children round her, quietly proceeded with her crochet work, while the Lords and Commons debated on the address? Ah! my dear, I am afraid that would never do. We must have some of that pomp and show and glitter, barbaric as you will or not, but still calculated to dazzle people's eyes, and excite their admiration and applause. When the Sovereign goes forth upon imperial business, it must be in some state and splendour. Whether it be some Visigothic chieftain raised on a shield above the shoulders of his shouting warriors, some *Roi Fainéant* of the Merovingian race, a listless, pallid, long-haired kingling, dragged languidly through the streets in a painted wagon by sleek oxen; whether it be a Plantagenet monarch on horseback—his armoried mantle trailing over his charger's flanks, his armour glittering in the sun, his sword upon his thigh, the plumes in his helm swaling in the breeze; whether it be His Holiness the Pontifex Maximus jolted along in a carved-armed chair, borne by halberdiers, fanned with peacocks' feathers, and canopied by a great square umbrella; or else His Majesty the Emperor, surrounded by his brilliant staff, curveting on his trained steed; bowing to the mad populace, or waving his laced hat towards the balcony, where sits his wife in her magnificence and her beauty; or Rajah Mummoo Somebody Khan in his jewelled palanquin, atop of a much-be-howdahed elephant; or, indeed, poor black King Jim or Tommy, with nothing on but a cocked hat and a pair of epaulettes, his royal frame well greased all over, and himself slightly excited by libations of rum, a posse of dingy attend-

ants preceding him, banging tomtoms and blowing conch-shells, and twenty-seven of his favourite wives bringing up the rear, and in this grandeur going to open a palaver; whether Royalty assume any of these forms of self-assertion, it seems clear to me that we must have some sort of a show, and a pageant, and a " barbaric pomp " of procession. For if all things, my dear, on this earth were reduced to their very cheapest form of expression, and to their abstract conditions, we might find out some day that we could get on without Kings and Chancellors, Emperors and Popes, Bishops and Ushers of the Black Rod. A discovery which would utterly destroy the framework of society, and is therefore to be strongly deprecated.

But we will talk no longer on subjects of which, as women, we can of course know nothing at all, and come back like volatile, frivolous, inconsequential beings as we are, to millinery and mantua-making. 'Tis the ministers' duty to compose Her Majesty's speech, and to dole out through its paragraphs that remarkably short allowance of English grammar so characteristic of orations from the throne. It is our province to superintend the snipping and stitching of our court dresses, to take care that our complexions look as well by day as by candlelight, and so avoid as far as possible tripping ourselves up with our trains. For the days of black boys are departed; and although the Queen has her pages, a couple of juvenile train-bearers, of either sex, would be looked upon as ostentation by the censorious persons about the Court. Envy and malevolence, my angel, do not always dwell in caves underground, nor are they perpetually occupied in gnawing their own viscera. They come out into the sunlight frequently, are seen at the best end of St. James's Street, rattle down the Mall in carriages, sweep through the Ambassador's court, and are ushered into the very Presence itself.

I would have given, ah! how many months of my weary old life, to have seen you dressed and ready—blooming, radiant, comely, as I am sure you were—to wait upon your Sovereign. Lady Coseymore came for you in that stout, roomy, bottle-green carriage of hers, with the coat-of-arms displayed on a sort of patchwork counterpane, forming the hammercloth, with the fat, leisurely horses, the fat, responsible-looking coachman, the upright, contemplative footmen, all arrayed in a becoming, but severe and dignified splendour. These old noble families differ so much in their equipages and appointments from the *parvenus*, from the Manchester aristocrats, and stock-broking politicians, from the *nouveaux riches*, in a word. I can see my Lady Coseymore in her diamonds, and that wonderful skirt of silver tissue she wore, I am given to understand, at the marriage of the Princess Charlotte; I can see the final glance of inspection and approval given to my Louisa by the feminine De Fytchetts; I can see her mounting with modesty, yet with dignity, into the august, double-bodied vehicle awaiting her at the door; the stowing away of the tremendous length and breadth of drapery, the starting of the stately steeds towards their exalted destination. You see I have been inspired by reading the *Morning Post*.

You departed; two vulgar little boys at the corner of Great Mandarin Street, you tell me, bawled out a "hooray," as the *cortége*—can one carriage make a *cortége?*—swept by. Who knows but that there may have been some little envy and malevolence looking out of the dining-room windows of the house on either side of you in Pagoda Square? Who knows but that in the upper chambers of the house you had just quitted, some tiny grains of envy and malevolence may have been lingering? But my Louisa went onwards. Some wretched debtor, perhaps, whom the bailiffs were taking

to captivity in a cab, caught a glance at the radiant lady as she was borne swiftly past. Ah! hill of Piccadilly, on your foot-pavement how many poor forlorn souls may have been trudging along; how many faded, wistful eyes from beneath shabby hats and battered bonnets may have been cast towards the gorgeous chariots, with their serene occupants, as the tide of grandeur rolled towards the top of St. James's Street! Where there was a stoppage, of course, as in the old days, when I used to go to Court; but Bow-Street officers, dressed something like country squires in a comedy, used to perform the duties which now devolve on the polite and silver-laced and white-gloved inspectors of police. Yes; there was Mr. Townshend, from Bow Street; likewise Mr. Lavender, and Mr. Ruthven, and Mr. Smithers, who was killed by Mr. Thistlewood. Then slowly, as on the Derby Day, one defiled in a barouche and four, the post-boys holding up their whips in warning. through Cheam Gate. I see the double, single stream of carriages passing down St. James's Street; the pavement crowded, and among the black-coated or brown-skirted commons who stare and wonder, a sprinkling of officers in glittering uniforms, of Deans and University Dons in full canonicals and academicals, of those anomalous Deputy-Lieutenants, and of foreign notabilities in strange handsome costumes, who have come out of the Clubs, and are modestly walking to the Palace. There:—I imagine you arrived in front of that dingy black brick structure. The officers of the Life Guards are prancing and pawing—at least their trained chargers so prance and paw at the corner of Pall Mall, just by the fashionable emporium where Mr. Sams has for so many years obligingly dispensed Opera boxes and stalls. The Life Guards' Band, with gold coats, and jack-boots, and jockey caps, are braying and banging away on the other side of the street close to Mr. Porpa, the tailor's. The horses sit

as quiet under the braying and banging, as though they had been bred at Astley's. The private Life Guardsmen look reserved and severe, fully impressed, of course, with the gravity of their position. A grave position it is, and a weighty one, to have to sit among so much sheepskin on that large sable dray-horse, to have to wear all that polished hardware on the back and breast, that German-silver pipkin on the head, and those immense jack-boots.

And after this, it was a gorgeous vision. It was a magnificent and delightful dream. You were squeezed and crushed, and carried upstairs and downstairs, and through chambers painted and panelled, and gilt, amidst a Mob—yes, mob is the only word—of people in stars and plumes, and uniforms and diamonds. You lost your fan, which somebody —who was it, Miss ?—bought you on new year's day in Paris as *étrennes*, and which cost a hundred francs. Lady Coseymore lost a little gold pouncet box, ornamented with emeralds, which had once belonged, *dit-on*, to Sophia Dorothea of Hanover. People are always losing something at drawing-rooms, and in the old days of the "Pen," which is now, I am pleased to learn, abolished, not only fans, but handkerchiefs, epaulettes, sword-scabbards, bouquets, shoes, and even trains were torn and wrenched away, trodden under foot, ruined, and lost. Of all mobs, a well-dressed one is the worst. Fortunately your adventures were unmarked by any serious casualty; but I find that you, too, testify to a certain amount of squeezing and confusion in the general arrangements. Then you had an indistinct notion of an embroidered coat sleeve being thrust through the press of struggling splendour, and of a hand taking the cards on which your name, and that of Lady Coseymore were, written. Then you moved on again, plumes waved, diamonds sparkled, trains rustled; but your impression of things grew more and

more indefinite. The heat, the odour of perfumes, the confused murmur of all these gilded butterflies flapping their wings, the shifting kaleidoscopic nature of the whole scene, dazzled and confused you.

At last you saw a Lady with a kind face and a tiara of glittering gems. There were more faces round you, faces of ladies in ringlets, faces of bald old men with great collars and chains of gold and jewels round their necks. Bars of blue ribbon cut your field of vision with scarlet spots between, as though you had been gazing on the sun. You did not faint, your stout neighbour in brocade trod too hard on your toes for syncope to be possible. You were elated, delighted, transported, and yet you say you felt very much inclined to have a good cry. But at length it was all over. You seemed to be sinking into the earth, when somebody mumbled out your name. Then you sank deeper into the earth, and somebody—was it a Cabinet Minister?—said it was very warm. How you found yourself in another gilt and panelled room, fanning yourself, you don't know; but there you were. An attaché of the French Legation was whispering a funny story to Lady Coseymore, who tapped him on the arm with her *flacon d'odeurs*, and called him *mauvais sujet*. The dear old dame said that she had never remembered to have seen Her Majesty looking better, and that she would very much like, herself, a macaroon and a glass of malmsey. A sallow Turk with a blue-black beard, a fez cap, and a great diamond gorget at his coat collar, was staring you out of countenance. He said something, doubtless complimentary, but decidedly guttural, to another Turk, who also stared. But you no longer felt inclined to faint or to cry. You had been presented and you were happy.

Once upon a time, my dear, thousands of years ago so far

as we know, there flourished an odd, quaint, artistic people called the Egyptians. I have been reading all about their private life, manners, and customs in a clever, learned book, written by Sir Gardner Wilkinson, who has dispelled many errors under which I, and I dare say a good many other persons, formerly laboured. The Egyptians, *mia cara*, didn't worship onions. Isis hadn't the head of a cow; Anubis had a jackal, and not a dog's head, so that even Mr. John Milton is wrong in his mythology; the outer lines only of the Egyptian door-jambs sloped—so that the Egyptian Hall, in Piccadilly, is architecturally incorrect; and the story of the trochilus, the obliging bird which is supposed to pick the leeches out of the crocodile's jaws, is a silly fable. But there is one custom of the Egyptians of which I had often heard, and which, according to Sir Gardner Wilkinson, was really common among them. The strange and characteristic paintings on the walls of their tombs show that they frequently introduced a Mummy at their feasts, to remind the merry-makers of mortality. Imagine a mummy in the presence-room at St. James's! Imagine the Lord Great Chamberlain unlocking, with his golden key, the door of a carved and gilded closet, and showing a dusty, yellow skeleton within.

But our age is too polite and too genteel for such ghastly mementos. It is this perpetual sofa of mine, at Pumpwell—this hopeless couch of dreariness and anguish that makes me think of the mummy at the Egyptian feast, of the fantastic skeleton at the English drawing-room. So, too, while my eyes wander over the *Court Circular* in the urbane columns of the *Morning Post*, do I remember to have read of the stern and rigid sectarian, John Knox, preaching before the maids of honour of Mary Queen of Scots, in something like these words: "Ah! fair ladies, ah! noble damsels, how brave and gallant would be this life, *if it would only last!*" So, too, do

I recall some words written in a book entitled the "History of the World," by a brave and wise English gentleman, whom the cruel Elizabeth and James kept for years mured up in a noisome den in the White Tower of London. His bed-chamber was in the thickness of the wall. His study was a gloomy hole. You may see the place any day for six-pence, and his name was Walter Raleigh. He had been among the gayest of a gay and gorgeous Court. He had basked in the royal favour, and lain down his mantle for the imperious Elizabeth to walk over. He had been the foremost in feasts and pomps, masks and water-pageants. He had stood on the steps of the throne and quaffed the Queen's wine, and he had come to this dull captivity in this sorry kennel. There came, too, unto him the mummy, the skeleton, at the meagre banquets his prison fare furnished forth. He did not fear the grisly appearance, but looked it firmly in the face, and wrote imperishably of it thus: "Oh! eloquent, just, and mighty Death! whom none could advise, thou hast persuaded; what none hast dared, thou hast done; and whom all the world hast flattered, thou only hast cast out of the world and despised. Thou hast drawn together all the far-stretched greatness, all the pride, cruelty, and ambition of man, and covered it all over with these two narrow words: *Hic Jacet.*"

CONSTANCE CHESTERFIELD.

LETTER THE THIRTEENTH.

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS ON THE TRAINING OF YOUNG PLANTS.

To my mind it is extremely doubtful whether men should, under any circumstances, be intrusted with the early training of youth. It will gladden the hearts of very many estimable ladies who keep preparatory schools for young gentlemen, and draw, in the advertising columns of the *Times*, such flattering pictures of suburban or seaside "Homes for little boys," when I maintain that there are many arguments in favour of leaving such boys with their governesses until they are at least ten or twelve years of age. Having broached this theory, I anticipate, at once, a storm of expostulation and dissent. The advocates of the "Tom Brown" system—the narrative of that youth's school days has made a great sensation here—will of course cry out that I wish to raise a generation of milksops and mollycoddles, and tie boys to the governesses' apron strings when they should be scampering about the playing fields, and bruising each other's shins at football. My dear, I think "Tom Brown" very clever, and am glad to believe its author to be an earnest, vigorous, humane man; but we are all too prone to run after systems, and pin our faith to them; and I predict anything but beneficial results from this "Tom Brown" mania. 'Tis precisely the same as putting little boys into knickerbockers,

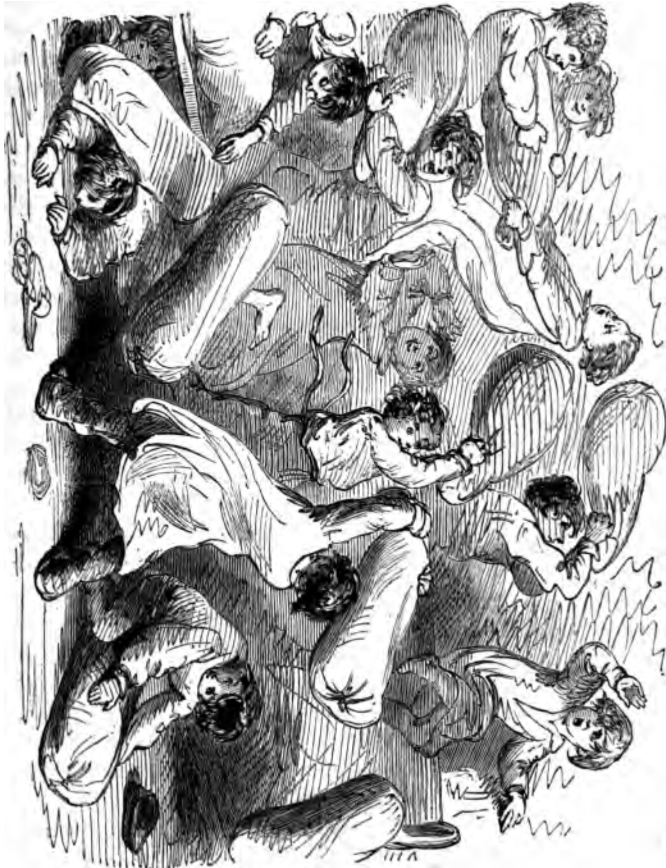
and little girls into red stockings, arbitrarily and indiscriminately. Some children those articles of costume suit admirably well; of others they make perfect frights.

The worst of bigoted Tom Brownism is, that it renders the notion prevalent that nothing good in education for boys can exist but what comes out of Rugby, and that no boy is worth twopence who has not been educated by Doctor Arnold, or by a successor of that amiable and estimable Christian schoolmaster. The beau idéal of a schoolboy, according to the ultra-Rugbeian theory, is a curly-headed, blue-eyed, sturdy, athletic little lad, who is amazingly dexterous at cricket, prisoners' bars, and hare and hounds; who despises sweetstuff, and has a soul above indigestible pastry, but has an honest taste for sausages and treacled rolls, cider and country ale. He plays very hard at manly games; he refreshes himself with the substantial delicacies I have mentioned; he varies the tenor of his amusement sometimes by a fair stand-up fight, in which the lesser boy always gets the best of it; and then he comes into school, is wonderfully assiduous, construes without a fault, and makes beautiful Latin verses, to the delight of the Doctor, of his schoolfellows, and of his parents and guardians. And it is a remarkable circumstance that although Tom is too good a boy to be beaten, the birch is always in the cupboard, and held *in terrorem* over him by his affectionate guide, philosopher, and friend, the Doctor. Thus, we don't execute people for high treason now-a-days; but disagreeable provisions for hanging, drawing, and quartering traitors yet linger in the Statute-book.

Tom, so educated, is the boy to go to college and carry off high honours there. He is a pugnacious boy, but is never cruel or tyrannical. He is decidedly pious, too, in a manly, outspoken way. "Muscular Christianity," I believe, the Brownites call Tom's theology. The "muscular Christian" is, I presume, a

pietist who turns over the leaves of his prayer-book with the thumb of his boxing-glove. Tom is now ripe for a college fellowship, for a stroke-oar in his boat's crew, for the bar, for the army, or—oh, strange old England!—for the church. Yes; there is positively a very strong idea abroad that Tom's sausages and cricket-bats, his Latin verses, and sparring bouts, enter into the exact training required for a model Christian priest! The odd reverses one sees to medals every day. A's ideal of a clergyman is a pale-faced man in a high black waistcoat, who keeps fast-days, and calls his back-parlour an "oratory." B's model of a parson is a "muscular Christian," a strong-limbed incumbent, who endears himself to his parishioners by walking about amongst them in a velveteen shooting-jacket and corduroys, a bull terrier at his heels, and a short black pipe in his mouth. Some like their clergy clean shaven, and would not even object to a neat tonsure, about the size of a crown piece shaven off the cranium; others are much taken with the hirsute appendages which, since the camp "roughing it" before Sebastopol, some muscular Christians have made it fashionable to wear. For my part, I am content to take my pastors as I take my oysters—without their beards.

So old, and crotchety, and behind this enlightened and expensive age is your poor mamma, my Louisa, that the probability of my having erred in this, as in many other things, is extreme. The Rugbeian system may be, after all, the golden mean of education. I wonder if it ever sends any young men to the bar who don't get briefs, any students into the church to starve on curacies of eighty pounds a year, any lads into the army to waste their health and energies and tarnish their virtue amidst the dull sensualities of a barrack life. But the system and its offshoots are the fashion, and will have their day, I suppose. So, too, when your mamma



was young; I have heard bishops and peers, ay, and fashionable ladies, expatiate on the benefits of the old rough-and-ready public-school system, the good old Eton, Harrow, Westminster, and Winchester plan. Plenty of flogging, and plenty of fagging, plenty of bullying of the weak by the strong, plenty of "chevying," and "paper chasing," and good hard fighting—professional pugilists were not unwelcome guests at public schools thirty years since;—plenty of boating and straying out of bounds (under the rose, and beneath the shadow of the rod); and plenty of Greek, and Latin, and ancient geography, but no modern acquirements whatsoever — those were the things requisite and essential to the education of boys who were hereafter to be bishops, peers, generals, and judges. Without Eton and Harrow, the great Duke of Wellington used to say, he could never have won Waterloo. It is curious, however, to remark that his Grace, when Lord Wellington, in the Peninsular, used to grumble sadly in the private dispatches he sent home about the ignorant, aristocratic young officers with whom his head quarters swarmed. But for fox hunting, too, the Great Captain is said to have declared, there would be no cavalry. Of course there never was such a place as the cavalry school at Saumur, in France; of course the inept and imbecile commanders who ruined the British cavalry force in the Crimea had never heard of fox hunting; and equally of course, the town or country lout who, by a slow and painful process, is trained to be a dragoon, has been in the habit, from his boyhood upwards, of riding to hounds on his own black mare, Bess. And, oh!—the dangers of dogmatism.

Ed anche io—and I, too, have my little shred of a dogma, and must defend it. "Keep boys under the care of women until they are twelve years of age," I think I hear people exclaim. "The absurd idea!" Let me explain. There

are, of course, certain departments of physical education which men must necessarily teach to the merest children. The groom or coachman must instruct little master in the management of his first Shetland pony. A swimming-master should initiate him into the mysteries of the cold bath; a drill-sergeant, when he is about eight or nine, should put him through his exercise; and if his earliest cartoons, executed principally through the medium of a slate-pencil and a shilling box of paints—which his governess, by the way, should teach him not to suck—manifest a reasonable aptitude for graphic delineation, he should forthwith receive lessons from a clever drawing-master; for no woman yet, that I am aware of—not being an Angelica Kaufmann or a Rosa Bonheur—could teach drawing properly. The ladies can tickle ivory and coax Bristol board into a glossy softness of light and shade; but beyond that, *elles ne valent pas deux liards*. Given the occasional lessons of these male tutors, I don't see that any other part of education exists in which a boy cannot be excellently well grounded by a governess, and always without making him a milksop. I know there are some ungovernable wretches who would kick a young lady's shins, refuse to repeat their lessons to her, tell her that they don't care for her, and that she is a beggar, and that mamma says so; but these are exceptions to my rule. I am dealing with children, not with monsters.

Have I not known little girls as rebellious and as insulting, with the aggravation even of saying those coolly-cutting and sneeringly-impertinent things which seem to come so naturally to the youngest female tongue, and become it so ill? But the average boy will be docile and obedient, and, in his wildest moods will, by an intuitive feeling of generosity, succumb to a woman. Some of the greatest men of ancient and modern times have been brought up at a woman's knee,

and have been no milksops for that gentle influence in after life. So Brougham, John Wesley, Philip Doddridge, were reared. A woman is gifted by nature with many special faculties for education. There are in her a kind patience and indomitable courage in going over the same ground over and over again, and smoothing every pebble which the restive young pupil has kicked up, a marvellously facile power of combining amusement with instruction, of making the dreariest lessons interesting, and withal a real love for her vocation seldom possessed, seldom felt by men. The stupid errors of the age assume that women are incapable of imparting even the elements of classical learning. I should not like to see cohorts of young ladies emerge from finishing schools to be as learned as Madame Dacier or Lady Jane Grey, as philosophical as Hypatia or Madame Duchâtelet; but I am persuaded that a boy could not learn his accidence and go through his Greek and Latin Delectus under better and sounder tuition than that of a refined and intelligent woman.

There is, in one of Mr. Dickens's novels, the delineation of an exquisite trait of love and patience in a sister, whose brother is grinding away in a dreadful cramming school, and who, of her own volition, acquires the knowledge he is being painfully taught, and goes through his exercises with him at night to explain and elucidate, to clear the thorny path, and make the barren desert smile into fertility. That which Florence Dombey did for little Paul I am convinced legions of English sisters could do for their brothers doomed to precocious efflorescence in Doctor Blumber's forcing house; and that I am sure could be done by young women educated to explanation and instruction—done with smiles and kind words, and making that a light and joyous task which is now uncouthly and laboriously accomplished by men, with frowns, and harsh language, and brutal stripes. "The mind of

youth," some obtuse disciple of Solomon has written, "is like a walnut tree, and must be quickened in its advances to maturity by blows." Ah! how much better it would be if only roses and peaches grew on the tree of knowledge, and if the child could be held up by kind hands to pluck the fruit and flowers with his baby hands. "Keep them at it; drum it into them; make them learn," I hear the disciples of Solomon growl, brandishing canes and rulers the while. Cannot a good handwriting be acquired without the excoriation of one's knuckles by the ruler? Cannot the *arbor sapientiæ* grow without blows? Must the Castalian fount be ever one of salt, salt tears? Are the Castalides themselves hard-visaged spinsters, in spectacles, *coiffées à la Furieuse*, with horn-books in one hand, and virgal twigs in the other? Ah, no!

You, my dear, were not brought up to look upon learning as a penance and a *corvée*—to regard knowledge as a terrible sphinx, who would devour you if you could not construe his riddles. You had your infantile whims, and perversities, and naughtinesses, and were punished for them; but so soon as you could reason you began to learn, and the ways of learning were made pleasant to you. I declare that three-fourths of the little I know was so gathered—by the kindness, and gentleness, and patience of those around me; and the consequence was, that I used to do that which children sternly brought up *never* do—read my school-books out of lesson-time. Much I taught myself, and always found those who would answer and enlighten me; but when harder school times came, and the yoke was put on my neck, and the goad pricked my side, I began to *unlearn* and to hate the things I was taught. I have seen grown men—half in fun, but with a rueful foundation of seriousness—shake their fists at a bust of Homer or Virgil. I know some girls must look back with horror at "The Adventures of Telemachus," "Gold-

smith's Geography," and Soave's *Novelli Morali*. Nay, although I mention the subject with all due reverence and awe, there is another Book—the greatest book that ever was written—which many young persons regard with a shy and uneasy avoidance; because in youth they were set in gloomy corners to learn by heart, not the blessed lessons of faith and mercy with which that book abounds, but dreary and interminable genealogies of Hebrew kings, and (to them) incomprehensibly vehement denunciations of cities, doomed to destruction.

I say, make the ways of learning pleasant, and the children will learn and wax strong in the knowledge of good things. Who ever forgets the nursery rhymes of infancy? and yet the histories of Tom Tucker, of Little Bo Peep, of Jack Horner, were never drummed or drilled into us. What little girl ever forgets how to handle a needle and thread? what boy the art of cricket playing? A sensible and intelligent governess might ground a boy in his humanities with as much ease as his nurse teaches him the deathless legends of the nursery. We should be spared many bitter hours in after life. Fewer mothers would have to weep less when their boys come home for the holidays, and tell them what they have endured at school. Fewer dull, sullen boys would grow up irrevocable dunces. More rarely should we quote the humorous problem of the charity boy who had just mastered the first page of the spelling-book —"Whether it was worth while going through so much to learn so little?" and not so frequently should I be haunted by the phantom of the master of a grammar school who once lived near us in the country—a brawny, hulking, black-whiskered, ill-tempered fellow he was; albeit a ripe scholar and a just man, who used to dawdle into our garden when school was dismissed at four in the afternoon, yawning in his

cap and gown, stretching his great arms, and declaring that he was wearied out of his life with hammering *Amo, Amas*, into the heads of a pack of stupid little brats. I often used to think that the little brats might be taught *Amo, Amas*, without much hammering, and without their being found so very stupid, and by a professor in a cap and gown too—only the cap might have a little lace and a few ribbons about it, and the gown be of *barége* or *mousseline-de-laine*, and the teacher herself a governess. Let us hope that better times are coming, and that a way will be found out to teach young bears to dance without the aid of red-hot plates and a switch.

What are you to do, then, with a dunce? you may ask. We have all known them, those forlorn and hopeless ones, with their heads made of impenetrable stuff, and their backs, through much belabouring, grown hardened and callous to blows. There they sit, the last on the form, the tenants in frankpledge of the corner, the hereditary wearers of the fool's cap, the smitten and pointed and stormed and jeered at, the derision of their comrades, the aversion of their teachers, the burdens to themselves. There they sit woebegone, amazed, and stupefied; their fingers dabbled in ink, their nails shapeless with long biting, their hair rumpled, their poor faces smirched with unavailing tears, their books not more dogs-eared than their pinafores. There they sit and mope, and con the dreadful task, and desperately strive to master it, and cannot. They are not idiotic; they are simply dull. Are they to be turned to any use beyond being whetstones or biting jests and frightful examples to idle scholars? I think, yes. Take away their books, abandon useless interrogations as to the paternity of Henry the Eighth and the geography of Europe. *Try and teach the dunces something else.* Believe me they will learn. Some of the most dunder-headed young persons—in the class-room—I have ever known, were

extraordinary adepts at carpentering, at gardening, at flower-making, at modelling coaches and clocks in pasteboard. Try and discover the latent faculty. It must be somewhere. When you have found it, strive to foster and develope it, and it will afterwards bear good and precious fruit.

For this task who is so suited as a woman? By patience and kindness she alone can eliminate the shining needle that lies perdu somewhere in this tangled bottle of hay. Black-whiskers, yonder, in his trencher cap and master's gown, thunders out at the poor dunce; tells him, in a student voice, that his ignorance is a crime; that he will come to be hanged; and that he will bring his parents' grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. How often has that awful prediction been launched at the heads of innocent lads whose worst offence was, that they could not do a sum in long division! And the poor snails crawl back, frightened, to their shells, and, not daring to build castles in the air, build them hundreds of fathoms underground among the gnomes and Kobbolds. I think that the very best thing that can happen to a confirmed dunce is to be so ill-treated at school as to be forced to run away. If he be caught his disgusted parents will probably send him to sea, or bind him apprentice to some trade; and years hence your dunce will be steaming up a Chinese creek in his gallant little gun-boat, or making tunnels and viaducts, or inventing engines for peace or war that will make his name world-famous.

The boys have the immense majority in duncedom. A girl who is a dunce is an extreme rarity; girls are naturally quick of apprehension, and apt to receive impressions. They learn everything more quickly than men do. Half-a-dozen lessons make a girl a capital horsewoman. They can drive almost by intuition, and do capitally the

things they have never done before in their lives. Take a raw lad and bring him into the world. Set him to swaggering about in a cornet's shell-jacket, or to eat his terms, or to preach in a glossy new gown and bands. For months—two good years sometimes—he will be clumsy, awkward, and constrained, will blush and stammer, will be in a painful state of uncertainty as to what to do with his arms and legs. But take me young Miss of seventeen, *posez-la* in a drawing-room. With what amazing celerity she masters all the little ways of the world, twirls her ringlets, looks over her shoulder, drops her handkerchief, flirts her fan, says prettily impertinent things! She never was taught all this. Madame Dooenner, at Hammersmith, where she received her finishing, would have fainted at the least suspicion that any one of her pupils knew how to bandy small talk with a gentleman. How should they know, those unsophisticated parlour boarders? At school they only saw Mr. Rubric the parson, Doctor Dosey the physician, and Mr. Tinctop the apothecary. There were foreign music and language masters, certainly, but the Argus eyes of governesses glared upon them during the lessons. They could not have learnt the art of conversation from the butcher's boy who trotted, whistling on his pony, to the green gate; from the deaf, bald-headed old horologer, who came, at stated seasons, to wind up all the clocks. No! female dunces are not to be found—at least, in any appreciable number. Eve knew the serpent at once, and, I warrant, was in the depths of a flirtation before he even mentioned the subject of apples; but Adam, I think, would have been shy and awkward, and would have declined to enter into conversation with the strange gentleman, on the ground that he had not been introduced to him.

I am afraid that my theory concerning the advantages of female tuition will not keep many young gentlemen from

being prematurely dispatched to public schools, or to classical and commercial academies. Yet I do think that the longer continuance of boys under the care of our sex would be productive of influences even more beneficial than those I have sketched out. I think a boy so brought up would learn grace and politeness, and a tender reverence for women. I think he would not be so apt to tease or insult his sisters, or to avoid the society of well-bred young women when he grows up. Of course there will come a time—I fix it between eleven and twelve—when a boy becomes fairly too strong and restive for a woman's authority—even the firmest and most experienced. He pants for school, its delights, its hardships and perils, even. He is too big for toys; his play is too rough for his little sisters; and, to tell truth, he is somewhat of an encumbrance in the nursery, and a nuisance in the house generally. Let him go to school then, by all means. Fill his playbox with Captain Mayne Reid's books, with plenty of wholesome playthings, tops, and bats, and balls, with plenty of stationery, and pencils, and pens, and a good box of water colours. Give him half a sovereign and a plum cake, and pack him off to school to "rough it." This "going to school" should be held over him, in his nonage, not as a threat, but as a privilege, as a promotion which he can only earn by industry and kindness to those about him, and cheerful obedience. So should it be, with difference as to details, and unless the permanent presence of a governess be within the means of a parent—as, I trust, it will be in your case, my dear—with girls. But I cannot imagine anything more dreadful, more cruel, and more injudicious than the sudden transportation of a little curly-haired fellow of five or six from the comforts and kindnesses of home to the stern Siberia of a school. In lieu of the nurse, the mother, the governess, who were wont, in patience and forbearance, to tend and teach him, he is

ushered into the presence of a Dreadful Being with whiskers and a white neckcloth, and gleaming teeth, who, in harsh tones, bids him mind his book, for Caneborough House is no place for idle boys. The shivering little wretch has scarcely ceased listening to the noise of the carriage wheels which have brought him to this educational jail die away, when he hears the voice he is to obey as an oracle booming out against some recalcitrant Master Smith or Master Jones, shearing away this boy's dinner, or dooming that luckless scholar to be immediately delivered to the tormentors. On the agonies of the first afternoon spent in the class-room or the playground by a delicate and tender-nurtured boy, surrounded by grinning young yahoos who pull his hair, assail him with brutal questions, and rummage his playbox as though they were Russian custom-house officers, I forbear to dwell. He looks around for sympathy; on no side does he receive it. The ushers pester him with interrogations wellnigh as intolerable as those of his schoolboys; the servants small-tooth comb his head as though it were a wool mattress, and they were carding it; and, as a new boy, are apt to be tart and querulous with him. He has not had time as yet to conciliate the lady who takes care of the linen, and the cake and gingerbread woman does not know him sufficiently to give him trust. Perhaps the little boy is sent, not to Caneborough House Select Academy (for the sons of gentlemen only), but to a great public school—to Eton, Rugby, Harrow, Winchester, Merchant Tailor's, or Charterhouse, which you please. Give him eight, or even nine years of age; and woe betide the unhappy little neophyte.

Fagging may not be the monstrous system of boy-despotism it was some years since; but, by all accounts, it is still brutal, tyrannical, and irrational. Pity the little boy fretting in a corner of his boarding-house, stealing furtively under

cloisters, or about playing-fields, bumped, cuffed, kicked, jeered at, made *corvéable* and *taillable*, forced to become an accomplice in conspiracies against authority, to spend his pocket money in dainties that make him sick, creeping shudderingly into a school, as a criminal with a bad case against him edges himself into the Old Bailey dock He has been taught at home that shameful punishment is due only to mendacity, to dishonesty, to rebellious obstinacy; he finds himself disgracefully punished for having a bad memory or an imperfect ear for rhythm; for omitting a syllable, for confounding the name of a river with that of a country—both river and country having vanished for a period of some nineteen hundred years from the face of the earth. The first night at school to a little boy is one of cold horror and bleak misery. The first month at school is a round of cruelty and oppression and insult. You know the philosophical toys called Rupert's Drops. In them behold the image of a schoolboy too early sent away from home to "rough it." They are hard at one end, these drops, as the nether millstone, and you may hammer them on an anvil, almost without making any impression on them; but give the taper end but a tap with your finger nail, and they dissolve at once into infinitesimal atoms. These drops have been too suddenly annealed, and their particles, beneath a thin coating of hardness, are yet in a state of repulsion. And thus, too, little boys may be too suddenly "roughened."

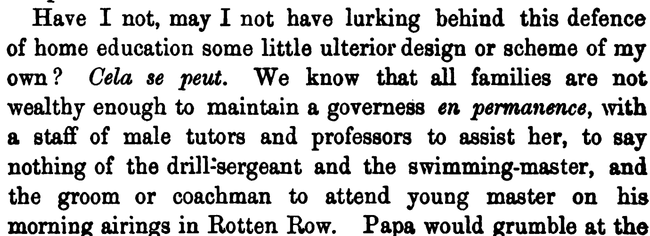
I anticipate your objections. The boy must begin his ordeal of induration at some time or another. He can't go on for ever under the tuition and management of women. He must "rough it" sooner orlater. Why not commence early? "That way the twig is bent the tree 's inclined," &c., &c., &c. Doubtless, my dear. But don't begin too soon. Don't begin with a tendril; wait till you have a twig, or, better still, a stout young sapling.

The twig, too early made to "rough it," is often nipped by the frost, and shivered by the evening blast. In my young days the principle of "roughing it" was carried to extremity in every grade. Young lords roughed it precisely as young chimney sweeps did. Fighting at school was vaguely supposed to make boys hardy, and capable of enduring pain. Beating was thought to be as good for their health as for their morals; and as good for their minds as for their morals. Boys were cast headlong, as it were, at ten years of age, into the cockpit of a man-of-war, to "rough it" as reefers. The result of all this "roughing it" was, according to some old ladies and gentlemen who yet flourish and speak with authority, the growth of a fine, bold, sturdy, enduring race of English youths, who only lacked opportunity to turn out Nelsons, Collingwoods, Wellingtons, Angleseas, Captain Cooks, and Mungo Parks. My uncle William, who was in the navy, used to sing an old song, beginning, if I remember correctly, thus:—

> "Troy had a breed of stout bold men,
> Yet Greece made shift to rout her;
> *'Cause each Greek drank as much as ten,
> And therefore was the stouter.*"

Such was the *rationale* of those whose creed was "roughing it." The rugose system of training was to culminate in an adolescence of cock-fighting, bull-baiting, and hard port-wine drinking, which were then thought to be the only Graces fit to buckle on the armour of Mars. How many of the old ladies and gentlemen tell us so now, and that our greatest heroes owe half their heroism to their having "roughed it" at a public school! There are persons going into ecstasies now about a model public-school hero, a Captain Hodson, late a commander of horse in India. He was a brave soldier, I have not the slightest doubt; but his principal claim to the

wide-mouthed admiration of the gaby throng was, that he shot dead and in cold blood two effete and defenceless Asiatics, he being at that time, and for three weeks afterwards, in a state of semi-delirium. Against such a cut-throat deed as this I will place the meek, calm heroism, and undemonstrative chivalry of a poor Suffolk parson's pale weakly son, Horatio, Nelson, the merciful magnanimity of James Wolfe, the cheerful bravery and quiet fortitude of David Livingston. But there are times when the world is so eager for heroes, and withal has such a paucity of them, that the first rude soldier that comes to hand is made to serve as a hero forthwith. There is always a stock of laurels on hand, which must be got rid of somehow. Was it not only the other day that the Corporation of London, having determined to present the freedom of the city to some great man, instructed the proper officer to procure a suitable gold box to hold the precious vellum? Through some misapprehension, the proper officer ordered *two gold boxes*, which were duly manufactured and delivered; and the Corporation, with their extra casket on hand, were in sore perplexity as to what to do with it, till they pitched upon an ambassador who had just come home from the unhealthiest climate in the world without having died of cholera or yellow fever; and on him they immediately bestowed the vacant freedom and the spare gold box, with many speeches and much applause, and a capital lunch afterwards.



Have I not, may I not have lurking behind this defence of home education some little ulterior design or scheme of my own? *Cela se peut.* We know that all families are not wealthy enough to maintain a governess *en permanence*, with a staff of male tutors and professors to assist her, to say nothing of the drill-sergeant and the swimming-master, and the groom or coachman to attend young master on his morning airings in Rotten Row. Papa would grumble at the

inordinate expense such an educational establishment would entail, and most probably cut the matter short by dispatching young master to Caneborough House or to Rugby, incontinent. I do not want to be thought too much of a *doctrinaire* My plan is susceptible of modification. Keep your boys at home till twelve, and let mamma or the governess make home homely to them; but let them attend King's College, or the London University Junior School, or one of the admirable district colleges that are now rising in the suburbs. Surely this won't make milksops of them. Let them go and study *Amo*, *Amas*, beneath the auspices of Bachelors and Masters of Arts, but Bachelors and Masters who are not pedagogues for ever flourishing the ferule and the rod.

Some foolish parents object to send their sons to these metropolitan colleges, because, forsooth, they are afraid of the lads being exposed to the temptations of the streets as they go to or return from school. Ladies, are you afraid that your darlings will learn to pick pockets or rifle apple stalls? to clamber up behind cabs and mourning coaches? or to play hopscotch in the gutter? Don't the Eton boys walk about Eton, and sometimes stray out of bounds? Don't the young cadets parade Woolwich? Don't the Westminster boys saunter about the purlieus of one of the vilest parts of London? Are not the pupils of Charterhouse and Merchant Tailor's and Paul's obliged to traverse the city's busy streets? And don't the Blue-coat boys walk about everywhere, bare-headed and independent? Who ever saw a Blue-coat boy playing leapfrog or "cat" with a charity boy or a shoe-black? The young gentlemen of Christ's Hospital respect themselves, and make others respect them; and a Blue-coat Grecian in his last year is quite as aristocratic in his way as a captain in the Life Guards. A well-bred and well-dispositioned boy will learn

nothing wrong in his daily perambulation of the streets, nothing half so wrong as that which he will be sure to learn, be he ever so young, during his first half year at Caneborough House, or at one of the great public seminaries. All this advice may seem premature to you, my darling. There will be time enough to think of such things, you may be of opinion, a dozen years hence. Daughter, there is never time sufficient to think of such things. Ever apace runs the world, and we cannot afford to lag behind for one instant. Adieu.

CONSTANCE CHESTERFIELD.

LETTER THE FOURTEENTH, AND LAST.

A LETTER WITHOUT END.

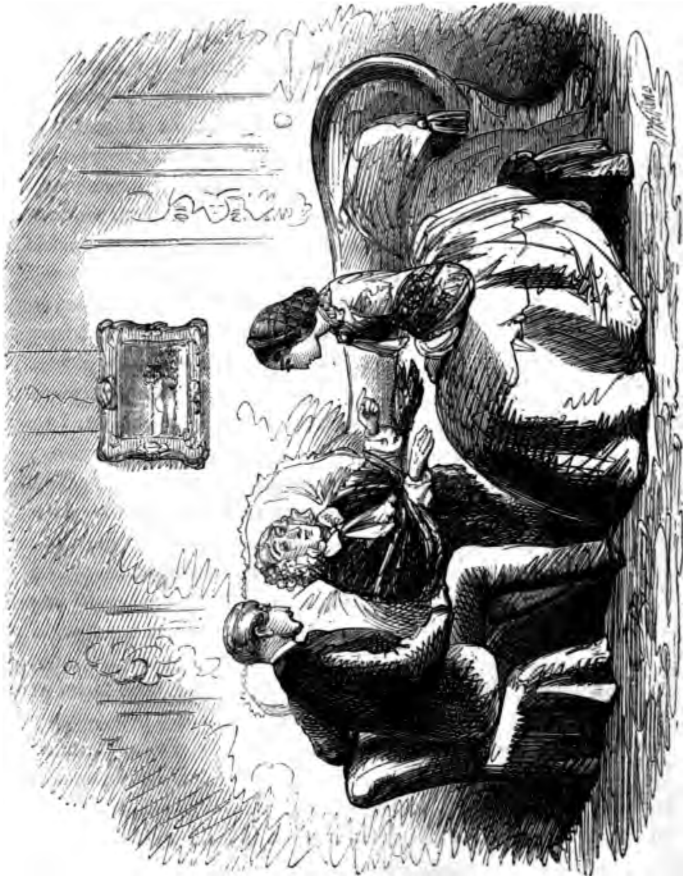
Musing the other day on a packet of books just brought by Shanko Fanko from the library to which I subscribe, and turning over now three-volume novels, now tomes of travels, now comic Christmas books, now magazines and pamphlets—for I take out my subscription to the last shilling's worth of privilege, and ransack the catalogue every Monday morning from beginning to end—I could not help thinking a little about the authors of the same books, and especially on the odd portraits affixed to the frontispieces of the works of those most popular among the scribbling craft.

It is positively irritating to find how widely unlike are authors to the images of them we vainly create for our own gratification. They don't even resemble their pictures. Sappho is forty-five, suffers from warts, and wears a wig; yet Sappho's publishers persist in engraving and re-engraving the bust of that blue-eyed girl with wavy hair, whom Sir William Ross limned so exquisitely in eighteen thirty-two. Yonder goes Anacreon Bays, the poet, with his sparse wisps of grey hair, his bulbous purple nose, and pendulous cheeks. He has no teeth now, and he wears spectacles; but, lo! in Messrs. Smilington's shop window lies open the eighth edition of Anacreon Bays's Sonnets to the Great and Lesser Bears; and, as a frontispiece, is Bays's portrait—a simpering head

of a Raffaellite-looking youth, with his hair parted down the middle, a high shirt-collar, and a cascade of black satin stock. They say that the Laureate, to look at, is a dreadful man, something between a national schoolmaster and a life-guardsman who has retired from the service. *Dans le temps*, I saw Mr. Rogers, the author of "Italy," and the exquisite lines to a Tear. His head would have been like a skeleton's, if it had not more resembled an exceedingly hideous door-knocker. I have read Campbell, the dignified, the passionate, the sublimely melancholy, in verse, and I have seen him in the flesh. He was a brisk little man, in a bright blue coat and brass buttons, and pepper-and-salt continuations. The light and jocund Leigh Hunt looked, I am told, like a long, lean old woman clothed in grey. Charles Lamb, the fanciful, the humorous, the poetical, was the image of a parish clerk—a little bowed man, with a spiky bald head, a projecting frill, a seal dangling from his fob; black shorts, worsted stockings, and gaiters. Sir Walter Scott, truly, looked like himself; but who would ever think, to regard his portrait, that the stout gentleman in an ill-made frock-coat, and the head like a Dutch cheese, was the famous Thomas Babington Macaulay, not only essayist, historian, and legislator, but the poet of *Ivry* and the *Armada*, and the *Lays of Ancient Rome?* The portraits of Mr. Carlyle, according to Mr. Nedwards, who knows him well, sufficiently resemble that terribly uncompromising Hangman of History; but only consider Mr. Benjamin Disraeli! There is a portrait of Mr. Benjamin Disraeli extant—of a handsome Caucasian-looking youth, with an ample turn-down collar, fire in his eyes, eloquence on his lips, and a mass of luxuriant black ringlets that a woman might envy. I have met Mr. Benjamin Disraeli, too, in society, many times, in the days when he wore black velvet pantaloons and point-lace ruffles, and when he would sit for

hours on an ottoman in the midst of the gayest evening party, his hands placed between his waistcoat and his heaving and French cambric-covered bosom, and his truly poetical eyes in a fine frenzy rolling. You saw Mr. Benjamin Disraeli, you say, on the day of the opening of Parliament. He was pointed out to you in Palace Yard. He is the Right Honourable Benjamin Disraeli now. He is at the head of a great party, and has been a Minister of State; but, alas! how changed from him. You saw a sallow, lean, old Jew-man, curbed and downcast, not handsomely dressed. There was no fire in his eye, there were no ringlets on his forehead; and people say that he is not so eloquent now as of yore, but that he labours, and strains, and stumbles, and halts, and is ofttimes dreary and monotonous. All, all must change, and come to gloom. That crowned head upon the florin will look too young one day to suit the Mistress of the Realm. Had Byron lived he might have been a doddering old gentleman in a brown jasey, and false teeth. I try to realise the idea of Napoleon at eighty, bald and gouty. I remember to have seen the ghost of the Great Duke Arthur swaying in his saddle as he rode up Constitution Hill. I have read of John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, half blind, half paralysed, peeping at his shrunken self in a mirror, and mumbling, "That was once a man."

I should not be half so much vexed if authors and poets at all resembled their writings; but they don't, my dear—they don't. We have all heard that droll Mr. Hood was the most hipped and melancholy of men; and that Lord Byron wasn't a quarter so miserable, maddened, despairing, as he pretended, in the *ottava rima*, to be. Mr. Nedwards tells me that one of the wittiest and brilliant burlesque writers of the age is one of the gloomiest of mortals—frequently sheds tears, speaks of himself as a miserable creature and a blighted being, and is



always going to throw himself over Waterloo Bridge. This is when his literary vein is comic. When, as sometimes happens, a brief ray of sunshine comes upon him, he goes home, skipping like the little hills; and, sitting down, indites the most mournful and tear-compelling ditties you can conceive. Mr. Nedwards says, however, that he believes him to be a true poet, which accounts for all these little inconsistencies. He tells me, too, of another popular literary character, who, by the immense amount of work he gets through, and his painfully minute and symmetrical handwriting, might be thought the most methodical and the most industrious writer of the day. In his works he tries to be alternately funny and sentimental, from which I was inclined at first to put him down as a poet too; but, according to Mr. Nedwards, he is a brawling, fractious, disorderly, indolent man; he hasn't a grain of sentiment in him; his fun is a perversity of humour—wit with a hump, indeed; that as for his sentiment, there lives not a profounder cynic: one who keeps a commonplace book of pathetic phrases; was never touched by anybody's woe, save when, by relieving it, he could minister to his own vanity, and placing the *summum bonum* of his enjoyment in a choice flask of wine and a rare cigar. Oh, for the anomalies, the contradictions, and the sorry reverses to the most brilliant of medals!

You say you met the eminent light *littérateur*, Ethelred Guffoon, at an evening party recently; and his conversation was charming, and chiefly relating to the coming Exhibition of the Royal Academy, and the approaching Italian Opera season. My angel, the Dowager Lady Aholibah—who is here, and who interests herself so much in Assyrian antiquities—knows Ethelred Guffoon very well. He criticised her book, "Cuneiform Inscriptions not Comical Cuts," which created so great a sensation in the literary world, in one of

the papers he writes for, last autumn. She says that the man, from ten to four, is one of the rigidest red-tapists imaginable, and ties himself to his desk till the dead letters enter into his soul; and that, after he has fluttered for a while at theatres, and balls, and parties, he goes home and works like a galley slave at his light literature till the dawn make the chimneys look like tall ghosts. How do men live through this work, through this incessant strain of body and brain? for such a man seems to work as hard with his hands as a pavior, and with his mind as a college student cramming for his examination. But clever Mr. Nedwards—he is going away next week, and I am *so* sorry—says that such captives in the *carcere duro* of the office and the study grow grey early, and sometimes go crazy and die. Mr. Nedwards says that *he* will never kill himself with hard work, and I don't believe he ever will.

He is going away, I have said, next week. Next week! Are we not all going away next week? Whither we know not. And these letters—for them also it is the season to say *tempus abire.* I have wearied my Louisa and her friends long enough, and next week there will be one unwelcome guest the less among her correspondents. Ah! *questa settimana prossima!* What notable things we have all in our time set down to be done "next week!" Next week the outhouse was to be slated, and the lock of that writing-desk, of which we had lost the key, was to be looked to; the papers of which we were in quest are mouldering in the desk now. Next week we would positively write to poor dear imprudent Fanny, who disgraced herself and grieved her family so by marrying Grimwood, the dissipated subaltern in an African regiment. Fanny's poverty, and dearness, and imprudence are all covered over and forgotten now beneath a few layers of sand and slab in the cemetery of Cape Coast Castle. Next

week, the consumptive gasps out, that she will be quite well and strong, and will pay that long-deferred visit down in Dorsetshire; and next day the doctor goes out at one door, and Death comes in at the other, and says, "It is enough," and beckons the sufferer away. The five-pound loans that were to be repaid; the three-volume novels and grave histories that were to be commenced; the good resolves that were positively to be put in operation—and all next week! My news-agent once sent me a periodical called "Next Week," and which professedly anticipated the events of the next seven days. After a while he ceased to send it. Is the periodical dead, I wonder, or will its publication be resumed "next week?" Oh! mortal men and women, we should be certain of the sands that yet remain in the upper chamber of the glass ere we so glibly hypothecate the resources of next week. There may not be grains sufficient to last another day. Now, thirteen times taking my pen to write these letters, I have said, "Next week Louisa shall have a worthier communication from her mamma. Next week I will be wise; next week I will be eloquent; next week I will say something." Ah! vain the thought, "that posterity shall not willingly let die." Do you remember that when poor Madame Roland was led to execution in '93, at the very foot of the guillotine, she asked for pen and paper, that she "might write the strange thoughts that were in her?" She was coarsely refused; and *bourreau* Samson did his spiriting act ungently, as was his wont. Who knows but that some of these "strange thoughts" may have risen within the breast of Jeanne Marie Phlipon Roland eight days before, and that she had said, "Well, next week they shall be written?" And next week came, and with it the tumbril, and Samson, and the guillotine. There are to be henceforth no next weeks for me.

I began these lines with some poor reflections, and I find myself in the midst of a letter which offers no definite prospect of a rational termination. Let it be, therefore, a Letter without End. A ship, the naval architects say, should properly consist of three portions—the "entrance," the "body," and the "run"—something like exordium, argument, and peroration, I think. The preponderance of strength, wise ship-builders tell us, should be in the middle. Alas! I look upon my poor little bark, and find it equally weak in every part—the "entrance" as feeble as the "run," the run as the "body." Peradventure it would have been better to have called the entire collection "Letters without End," instead of reserving that mystic title for the concluding one. Might not, indeed, the letters from a mother to her daughter be prolonged *ad infinitum?* I, who am so aged; you, who are so young and inexperienced: surely our epistolary intercommunication might have been prolonged till this hand stiffened, and I could hold the pen no longer. Had Madame de Sévigné lived longer—forgive me even for mentioning the name of that rare woman in the same breath with my humble self—do you suppose that she would not have covered innumerable reams of paper with shrewd observations, worldly counsels, and sparkling *bonmots?* But the pert French writer had this advantage, among a thousand others, over me, that she wrote from the capital of the world's civilisation and gaiety, to a daughter *ensevelie au fond de sa province*—buried, as it were, in a dull and remote country seat; whereas I write from my dreary hermitage and sad captivity at Pumpwell here to my dear girl, who lives in the midst of London's uproar and excitement. Moreover, the Dame de Sévigné's daughter was married, and she could in many instances, and for many reasons—for one, was she not a Frenchwoman, and of Louis Quatorze's court?—be more communicative than can I.

Again, the staple of correspondence and conversation in that age was scandal, and, more or less, malignant tittle-tattle. I appeal to my Louisa to free me from the charge of having wilfully traduced or aspersed the character of any one in Pumpwell. I have not even been so slyly satirical, or borne so hardly on the foibles of my fellow-creatures as you have, Miss, occasionally, in your letters to me. 'Tis true the majority of people here are too old and ugly to talk scandal about. Yet, dull and confined as is the world of an invalid—it commences at the bolster and ends at the foot of the sofa, my world—these letters might yet have been without end. Perhaps on a dozen special topics have I discoursed to you. I have a list of at least five hundred which I could tell off at once without faltering, as they say old Church-History Fuller could the shop-signs on the right and left-hand sides of Fleet Street, in days when every shop had its sign. The time I 've lost in quibbling; the things I have left undone; the little rays of light I might have shed on subjects yet cimmerian black to Louisa Chesterfield! The two brief papers on education should properly have expanded into half-a-dozen; and there should have been intercalary chapters on teething, on the measles, on the best playthings for children—ah! I must write that letter on playthings some day—on nursery rhymes, on juvenile dress and diet, on ghost stories, and on infantile perception and the best methods of quickening it. I have not said half enough about dress; have but barely glanced—and then only to make your younger and more foolish friends indignant—at crinoline's voluminous theme; and have not said a word about morning-wrappers, the art of putting on a bonnet, or the best way of dressing the back hair.

Your *dîner à la Russe* I have, indeed, expatiated on; but where are my sage counsels regarding the attributes and

appliances of cold meat, the means of varying breakfasts, the expediency or non-expediency of hot suppers, the evils and advantages of tea-drinking, the pernicious custom of eating oleaginous puffs and sticky tarts, and drinking iced and aërated waters, so common and so fatal to our fashionable female youth; the honesty and simplicity of taking bread and cheese and Allsopp's pale ale for lunch—(I never knew a woman the worse, and have known many the better for adopting that healthful custom)—and the grand national question of domestic cookery and economy generally? I have spoken of servants, but in far too brief and discursive a manner. I should have classified them under their several classes and families, and given you the diagnosis of each individual life. Music, the drama, arts, letters, fashion, behaviour in society, young men, old ladies, Irishmen, foreign travel, have each had some flighty words of comment from me. But where are my promised disquisitions upon Shakspeare and the Musical Glasses? Many who read these letters are already prepared, I doubt it not, to accuse me of sins of commission; but the sins of omission are those that weigh most heavily on your mamma. I have not said a word to you about the books you ought and ought not to read, and have discoursed a great deal too much about their vain and pretentious authors. I have touched once or twice upon art; but where are my remarks on the relative merits of the Italian and the Spanish, the Dutch and the Flemish school? where my discriminating *résumés* of the *genre* and the *grand style?* I have never accompanied you—in these letters—to church. I have not imparted to you my infallible recipes—thirty-six in number—for enlivening the *ennui* of a rainy day. On giving to beggars, on visiting the poor, on taking physic, on needlework, I have been wholly silent. I have done my best to answer, to amuse, to advise. *Non omnia*

passumus omnes—I copy my quotation from a dictionary; we cannot all play *primo violino*. There must be the *prima donna assoluta*, and the *prima donna di cartello*—ay, and the first soprano and the chorus singer. I may not have succeeded, but I have endeavoured, and from that I extract my tiny modicum of consolation. The Frenchman St. Pierre once designed to write a general History of Nature, but he stopped short at a single strawberry plant, and its examination and description found ample employment for twenty years of his life.

And courtship, and flirtation, and love and marriage:—what, if anything, to the purpose have I had to say upon those most important topics? Little to the purpose, I am afraid, although, perhaps, some few grains of sapience may be mingled in my reticence. So long as I saw no danger to my Louisa, I was silent. The wise pilot presages no storms in calm and sunny weather, but he neglects not to watch the fluctuations of the weather-glass and the variations of the compass, and his finger oft traces the starry sinuosities of the chart. I knew that my Louisa was safe, and I also knew that she would acquire in an innocent degree a great deal more knowledge about love and courtship and flirtation and the rest, than I could teach her. And so it has come at last: this thing, so often talked and thought, and dreamed and brooded over, this invincible and irresistible and uncontrollable passion, Love. The archer has pierced my Louisa, but in no ruthless, unscrupulous, unreasonable manner. She only feels a soft pleasure, and calls it pain. She is only about to wear an old, old fashion, as old as ever this world is, and thinks it the newest, brightest, most original fashion that ever was invented. What does it matter now how "sleeves are worn," when the heart is worn "*à la flèche de Cupidon, percé?*" Those stupid, silly, vulgar

valentines tell the truth every fourteenth of February, in their own imbecile manner, and the noblest and most imperial love—the courtship of queens and emperors—is but a duplicate in gold and purple of the inane cartoon of the gentleman in blue, and the lady in pink and a parasol, walking up a gravelled path to a Vauxhall-looking temple, where Hymen is cooking two skewered hearts on an altar—the village church spire in the background—Cupid, *volant*, above—more hearts and arrows in a posy, by way of foreground, and a babyish couplet or two: all the love letters of eminent personages in the world, Abélard to Héloïse, Petrarch to Laura, Charles VII. to Agnes Sorel, Henry VIII. (the wretch!) to Anne Boleyn, Charles I. to Henrietta Maria, could not be more eloquent. And always the same old, old tale.

I am not an admirer, as you know, of the French nation. My dear, good, and dead-and-gone husband hated them and their ways as much as he could hold any human creatures in hatred. And for French pictures, landscapes, pastel-portraits, engravings, and lithographs, I have always entertained a bitter aversion. When the French artists are not drawing whiskered grenadiers or ruffianly dragoons, or their eternal Emperor with his grey great coat and his hands behind him, they do not seem capable of producing anything beyond ballet-dancers and Turkish odalisques, and brazen creatures in black velvet trousers and shirt-sleeves, called, I believe, *débardeurs*. On no account should my sitting-room ever be decorated with a French print. Yet, the other day, little Miss Merrylegs showed me a French glove-box, or a *bonbonnière*, she had bought at the linendraper's or the confectioner's—I forget which—surmounted, according to the custom observed in *articles de Paris*, by a showily-coloured French lithograph. I was about to pass the thing over, thinking it to be

the usual tableau of *débardeurs* playing leapfrog, or bayaderes jingling their bangles, or sultanas lolling on cushions; but Merrylegs pressed me to a further examination, and I relented and looked. 'Twas one of the prettiest pictorial fancies I ever saw in my life. It had occurred to an ingenious artist to conjugate the verb "to love" in a series of graceful drawings; and here was the first person singular of the aorist tense, "*J'ai aimé*," I have loved. A young girl —she looks not more than seventeen—has, like Généviève, "told her love with virgin pride;" but then breaking down, covered with blushes and confusion, she has sunk down and hides her head in the lap of a stately old lady, whom I conjecture to be her aunt. The ancient relative's hair is grey; she wears a black silk calash; dainty lace mittens are pulled over her white, wrinkled hands; she sits in a high-backed *fauteuil* of the oldest fashion; she is prim, decorous, somewhat stiff and angular, perhaps, but you know almost intuitively that a kind, loving heart beats beneath that black silk calash. An open letter on the floor, read by the girl—an orphan, doubtless—to her aunt, helps out the drama. The girl, it is clear, is in the third person present tense, "*Elle aime;*" she loves. And the prim old lady, she bends forward to her trembling niece, half with the graceful courtesy of the old time—*le bon vieux temps qui ne reviendra plus*—half with a gesture of genuine, impulsive affection. She raises her head. She says, "*J'ai aimé!*"—I have loved! —in soft and kindly accents. She presses one hand on her heart; with a finger of the other she points to the wall, where hangs the portrait of a gallant young officer in trim moustache and powdered wig, in the spruce white uniform and blue *passementeries* of the *Mousquetaires de la Reine*. This is her love story. Dead the uniform. Gone the Queen's Musketeers, with their wigs, and white uniforms,

and blue turn-overs. Faded and dim the very portrait; but that invincible love yet reigns hale and strong in the bosom of the kind old lady in the black silk calash. Ah! if mothers, when their daughters come to them and confess—as all honest girls should confess—their love, would only take the trouble to conjugate the aorist of the indicative of the universal verb, and murmur gently to themselves, "I, too, have loved!" I declare that such a graceful concession to Dan Cupid turned Grammar-school pedagogue, would sweep away mountains of woe, would dry up oceans of tears, would turn hundreds of domestic dramas, of the most harrowing nature, into the most jocund of comedies; would smooth the wrinkles on angry brows, and turn the corners of mouths the right way; would save mothers from scolding, taunting, outraging, locking up their daughters in dark rooms on bread-and-water diet; would save daughters from wicked thoughts and wickeder disobedience, and flight, and disinherison, and despair.

Of you, my Louisa, we are to say, "*Tu aimes!*" There is no vanity in the admission from these pale lips, that I have loved, and very fondly. I thank God for it. I am travelling now along a dusty, stony road; but leagues away, and years agone, the pastures were green, the sky was blue, the sun shone very brightly, and the flowers were brilliant in the hedges. *Ich hab geliebt.* It is over now; but I spurn not the gem that has dazzled, I trample not on the flower that has decked my hair, now that its splendour is tarnished, and its bright hues are faded. Love on, children of Him who is all love; but be wise and tranquil in your loves. Sail on the bosom of the calm lake. Avoid that tempestuous ocean yonder. A cockboat is more easily managed than a hundred-and-twenty gun ship. I have nothing to say against your love, Louisa, nor its object; but ere many days I hope to see

you and *somebody else* sitting by my sofa, and listening to t
old woman's garrulous discourse. I have so much to talk
you about, so much to ask, to tell, to suggest, and to advi
that I fear our conversation, when we once meet, will be, li
this letter, without end.

CONSTANTIA CHESTERFIELD.

THE END.

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